**Research: Healing of the leper**

**Luke 5:12,13**

12 And it came to pass, when he was in a certain city behold a man full of leprosy: who seeing Jesus fell on his face, and besought him, saying, Lord, if thou wilt, thou canst make me clean.

“The man bowed down before him, to show him respect” (Barnes 37).

“Leprosy has always been, and is still, one of the most intractable diseases. Under the Mosaic Law lepers were regarded as unclean and excluded entirely from human society: see Lev. 13 and 14” (Dummelow 642).

“Whatever variety of skin disorder the man had, it caused him much suffering. This suffering was social as well as physical. The law required that ‘the person with such an infectious disease must wear torn clothes, let his hair be unkempt, cover the lower part of his face and cry out, ‘Unclean! Unclean!’ As long as he has the infection he remains unclean. He must live alone; he must live outside the camp (Lev. 13:45-46). Instead of keeping his distance from Jesus, as the law demanded, the leper came directly to him and fell down on his knees to make his plea. He had no doubt that Jesus could heal him. He only wondered whether Jesus was willing” (*EBC* 8.630).

“He does not say he believed him able, but with a brevity expressive of a confidence that knew no doubt he says simply, ‘thou canst’. But of Christ’s willingness to heal him he was not so sure” (Jamieson 3.51).

13 And he put forth his hand, and touched him, saying, I will: be thou clean. And immediately the leprosy departed from him.

“And Jesus—or "He," according to another reading,—"moved with compassion," says Mark

(Mr 1:41); a precious addition.

“put forth his hand, and touched him—Such a touch occasioned ceremonial defilement (Le 5:3); even as the leper's coming near enough for contact was against the Levitical regulations (Le 13:46). But as the man's faith told him there would be no case for such regulations if the cure he hoped to experience should be accomplished, so He who had healing in His wings transcended all such statutes.

“saying, I will; be thou clean—How majestic those two words! By not assuring the man of His power to heal him, He delightfully sets his [seal](http://d.7769domain.com/r/rd.html?#http%3A%2F%2F7769domain.com%2FAd%2FGoIEx2%2F%3Ftoken%3DWWVueUNiZ25rV1gyMjR6VUlkUDVtRlFmYjhiTnJHTFdCdHhDOE1CbGd4UzlQSXk1UU5jRTI5YkZCdUhRWTlteGxKenhDSlRTaUo5dWpucGZBaHQ0UUV4Z2JqeGRwblJvNmQvRnd6UmJDVTlPRUIrY3pIVnBlQVlOY1BvdnJMQnJ1NmpPRFpEYjVlc0tGNXBwa3B6MWl3PT01) to the man's previous [confession](http://d.7769domain.com/r/rd.html?#http%3A%2F%2F7769domain.com%2FAd%2FGoIEx2%2F%3Ftoken%3DODF1Y0hpNmh5eU0zZlFXekh4bXJRTy84NE1Wd0VIMUE2TWdZV0ZVYmU0Vis4L1dXb00ySzd5WEY1MTZJMU5Lb2RGaXlIM2pNZ3N6M0RiMjM5SUxDUEZMMUE5WjZwWXpndDlJcGVoMXJWYUQxd0hmWnBjSzhPODlWU3dWYlNDek83dENIejNJR00zZGo3cUp0eXRRWktUV3puWkl6TUVSUnV1R1JVL0tyTy93PQ2) of that power; and by assuring him of the one thing of which he had any doubt, and for which he waited—his will to do it—he makes a claim as divine as the cure which immediately followed it.

“And immediately his leprosy was cleansed—Mark, more emphatic, says (Mr 1:42), "And as soon as He had spoken, immediately the leprosy departed from him, and he was cleansed"—as perfectly as instantaneously” (Jamieson-Fausset-Brown Commentary, [www.bibehub.com)](http://www.bibehub.com)).

“No one was allowed to touch or even to salute a leper. If he even put his head into a place it became unclean. No less a distance than 4 cubits (6 ft.) had to be kept from the leper, or if the wind came from that direction, 100 cubits were scarcely sufficient. By thus touching the leper, Christ also showed his superiority to the Law of Moses” (Dummelow 652).

“Jesus’ touching of the leper not only resulted in his being cured, but also revealed Jesus’ attitude toward the ceremonial law. He boldly placed love and compassion over ritual and regulation” (*EBC* 8.630).

“It was an offence to the Jews to *touch* a leprous person, and was regarded as making him who did it ceremonially impure. The act of putting forth his hand and *touching* him, therefore, expressed the intention of Jesus to cure him, and was a pledge that he was, in fact, already cured” (Barnes 57).

“*Cleansed* in Greek is *katharizo* which means to make clean; from physical stains and dirt; in a moral sense; to free from the defilement of sin and from faults; to purify from wickedness; to free from the guilt of sin, to purify; to consecrate by cleansing or purifying” (Thayer 312).

Sources:

Barnes, Albert. *Barnes’ Notes on the New Testament*. Grand Rapids: Kregel, 1962.

Dummelow, J. R., ed. *A Commentary on the Holy Bible*. Harrington Park: Sommer.

*The Expositor’s Bible Commentary: Matthew, Mark*, Luke. Ed. Frank E. Gaebelein et al. Vol. 8. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1984.