

# A Leprous Man Thanks Jesus

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## Scene Summary

A leprous man thanks Jesus presents the story of 10 men – social outcasts because of leprosy – who were healed by Jesus, but only one returned to thank Him. Scenes include: leprous man shouting “unclean!” so men can avoid him...10 leprous men call out to Jesus to help them as He passes by on the road...Jesus heals the men...they run to the city for cleansing at the Temple...one man, a Samaritan, returns to thank Jesus...Jesus commends him...the man hurries to the city.

## Scripture

(Luke 17:11-19 NIV) Now on his way to Jerusalem, Jesus traveled along the border between Samaria and Galilee. {12} As he was going into a village, ten men who had leprosy met him. They stood at a distance {13} and called out in a loud voice, "Jesus, Master, have pity on us!" {14} When he saw them, he said, "Go, show yourselves to the priests." And as they went, they were cleansed. {15} One of them, when he saw he was healed, came back, praising God in a loud voice. {16} He threw himself at Jesus' feet and thanked him--and he was a Samaritan. {17} Jesus asked, "Were not all ten cleansed? Where are the other nine? {18} Was no one found to return and give praise to God except this foreigner?" {19} Then he said to him, "Rise and go; your faith has made you well."

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## Players

- **Narrator** – The play’s “catechist” or teacher should be a good reader with a clear voice.
- **Jesus** – God’s One and Only Son.
- **Leper 1, 2, 3** – More people can participate in this role if needed.

***Special Props***

- Normal items from the prop box such as cloaks, veils, robes and headdresses.
- Dirty and ragged clothes for the sick people.

## ***Script – A Leprous Man Thanks Jesus***

**Leper 1:** [crying out] Unclean! Unclean! I'm unclean!

**Narrator:** Others standing around watched carefully. They must not get too close to a man with leprosy, the sickness that made sores on his body.

**Leper 2:** [sadly] Oh, how I hate warning people not to come near me, as if I were a wild animal. I'm tired of wearing these old clothes and messing up my hair.

**Leper 3:** [sadly] That is the law concerning people with this disease. I guess I should be glad that we could at least talk with others that have the same sickness. All of us are sad and unhappy, we can't be with our families.

**Leper 1:** Those men probably didn't mean to be unkind, but I don't want to stay away from people. [crying] Will we ever be able to get back to our families? Will we always have to live outside the city?

**Leper 2:** But who can make us well?

**Leper 3:** I've heard that some people have gotten well.

**Leper 1:** There are not many, but it was God who made them well.

**Leper 2:** There is a great teacher who makes people well. His name is Jesus.

**Leper 3:** [excited] If we could find Him, perhaps he could make us well too. Then we could go to a priest who would say we were clean, then we could go home! [excited] We could live again with our families, go to work and be like others.

**Leper 1:** [pointing] Look, is that Jesus?

**Leper 2:** [stern] It can't be. His home is not near here.

**Leper 3:** But he travels they say. [excited] It is Jesus. [to the others] Lets go stand by the road and call to Him as He goes by.

**Leper 1:** [shouting] Jesus! Master!

**Leper 2:** [shouting] Jesus! You have great power. You can make us well.

**Leper 3:** [shouting] Jesus! You have helped so many others please help us.

**Jesus:** I will help you. Go now into the city and show yourselves to the priest.

**Narrator:** Quickly, the lepers began to run toward the city to find a priest.

**Leper 1:** [to himself] I'm going to be well!

**Leper 2:** [to himself] I'm going to be well!

**Leper 3:** [to himself] I'm going to be well!

**Leper 1:** [excited] Look, my sores are gone, I'm healed!

**Leper 2:** [excited] Now the priest will say we can return to our families.

**Leper 3:** [excited] I must return and thank Him.

**Narrator:** The man turned back down the road toward Jesus and His disciples. Jesus watched as the men hurried back toward the city and He smiled when He saw one turn back and return.

**Leper 3:** [falling down at Jesus' feet, crying loudly] Oh Jesus, thank you for making me well. Thank you! Thank God! Now I can go back to my family. I'm well! The sores are gone! I'm like other people again.

**Jesus:** Were there not ten men that were made well and only one came back to thank me. The others were Jews. This man is a Samaritan, a stranger in our land. [to the healed man] Stand up. Because you believed in me, your sickness is gone. Go to the priest and show him that you are well. Then you can go back to live with your family.

**Leper 3:** [humbly] Thank you Jesus!

**Narrator:** Quietly the disciples walked along the road with Jesus. They watched the happy man run along the road back to the city to find a priest. [pause] Jesus smiled as he watched the man pass close beside other men at the city gate.

The End

## ***Supplemental Information***

In Bible days, people with leprosy could not have any contact with other people. There was a good reason for this, since in the hot climate, the disease would spread rapidly, so a person with this disease could not live with their family or even inside the city. When the person with leprosy came upon someone outside the city, walking along the road, they had to call out “unclean, unclean” so that no one would come near them. To help others recognize that this person had leprosy, they had to wear old, torn clothing, they had to keep their hair messed and had to cover their lower mouth and chin with a cloth.

A person with leprosy could not enter any walled city. They could not talk with anyone except someone who had the same disease. They would not be able to go into the temple in Jerusalem to worship God. A well person could not greet them and in fact there was a law that everyone must stay at least six feet from them. If the wind was blowing from the direction of the person with leprosy, then you had to stay 100 feet away. If a person with leprosy went into a house, then no well person could live in that house again.

There was no cure for leprosy. People were so afraid of getting the disease that they often treated these people cruelly. Sometimes people would throw stones at the lepers to keep them away. They believed that only God could cure the disease. If a person were cured, then they would go to the priest who would examine him, and if it were true, then the priest would pronounce that they were clean and then they would be able to return to live with their family again.

People with leprosy often lived together outside the city. No doubt that the ten lepers that Jesus healed lived together. Probably they were so happy to be well that they could only think of running to the priest to get official approval to live and act like others. They were eager to show the priest that the disease was gone. Only one man came back to thank Jesus and he was a stranger in the land. He was a Samaritan. The Jews hated and looked down on the Samaritans. This man was especially happy that Jesus had made him well.

## ***More Information***

The disease of leprosy seems to be prevalent in Palestine and other Eastern countries in both Old and New Testaments days. However it is likely that some other skin diseases were also referred to as leprosy.

There are two types of leprosy (or Hansen’s disease as it is often called today): tubercular and anesthetic. First signs of tubercular leprosy are red spots on the face, hands and feet. Later – perhaps months or years later – hard lumps form in these places and ulcerate. Oil and sweat glands are destroyed. Hair falls out. Skin becomes white and scaly. Fingers, toes, nose and upper jaw are eventually destroyed.

Anesthetic leprosy develops slowly, too. Palms of hands and soles of feet become insensitive to pain and eventually the whole body loses sensation and the disease gradually destroys skin and bones.

Those with leprosy were not permitted to live with their families or even to live within the city limits in Bible days. The reason was that other people could become infected through close contact with the infected person. Lepers were looked down upon and feared.

Today the majority of persons with leprosy may have the disease stopped or arrested if proper treatment is given. Eastern and Oriental countries have many lepers. Mission and local governments have established hospitals to care for these people.