

THE LEPER IS CLEANSED



Passages to Study: Luke 5:12-15.

Read with the class: Luke 5:12-15.

Texts for memorization:

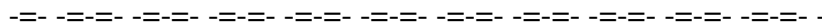
Younger: Isaiah 1:18 “though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow.”

Older Isaiah 1:18.



OBJECTIVES: To:

1. Show how leprosy, like sin, robs life of happiness.
2. Point out the filthiness of sin, the reason why a sinner needs to be cleansed.
3. Teach how the blood of Jesus Christ cleanses from all sin.
4. Illustrate how faith works; the leper did not doubt the power of the Lord Jesus.
5. Mention how the heart of the Lord Jesus never changes, He is still ready and willing to save sinners.



Note: To make the lesson easier to teach, we have presented the leper as a father of a family. His condition as a leper has caused havoc in the home, bringing anguish and sadness, causing him to be separated from his loved ones. The exact location in Galilee where this miracle occurred is not specified. This miracle took place after the Sermon on the Mount.

SCENE NO. 1 VISUAL HELPS. (a) Outside the city, the figure of a man walking away from his wife and children. They, in turn, are backing away from him. (b) In the corner, a picture of the happy family in former days.

DEVELOPMENT:

- The family is living happily as the sickness had not yet been discovered.
- When the diagnosis is given, the leprous father must go away from his home and city, leaving his wife and children behind.
- Leprosy is an unclean disease and when one member is affected, the whole family suffers. This destroys the happy family circle.

Cmt. The use of the word “unclean” in the Scriptures gives the idea of something unacceptable, not only before God but also in society. What is unclean is contrary to the holiness of God.

- The Law of Moses gives precise instructions on how a leper must be treated. It demands that the leper leave all public areas as long as he has the disease. (Leviticus 13:46.) Also see Leviticus 13:1-17, 2 Kings 5:27, Numbers 5:2.

Leprosy is a terrible disease that affects the skin, causing it to become insensitive to any sort of pain.

There are various forms of leprosy, and it can eventually cover the whole body.

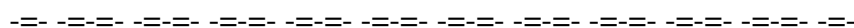
Cmt. Because of its characteristics, leprosy is used as a type of sin, since:

1. It affects the life of the person who has it, and consequently, this affects his relationship with others.
2. In Bible times, it was considered an incurable disease and, in the end meant death.
3. The leper was declared unclean and was prohibited from participating in any ceremony to do with God and the Temple etc.

Cmt. Sin also causes separation from friends and loved ones and often makes life difficult.

Cns. How much more suffering there will be when separation is for all Eternity, as will be the case with those who are lost forever. See John 3:36.

Sug. Try to make the students understand the sad situation of a leper; his separation, his loneliness, no joy in his life and worse still, the possibility of dying with no hope.



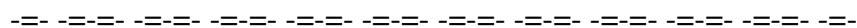
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SCENE NO. 2. VISUAL HELPS. An isolated area, outside the city showing the figure of a man with leprosy and Jesus with a group of his disciples walking towards him.

DEVELOPMENT:

- The leper must live alone in isolation and call out “unclean, unclean” when anyone comes near.
- Sug.** Ask the students how they would feel if they had to call out to anyone passing by to not have contact with them or even to come near. See Lev. 15:31.
- Separation from society was considered “a living death”
- Apl.** Among the many lessons to be taught in this miracle, the true confession of a sinner should be included. There are various examples in the gospels of Jesus listening to persons admitting or "confessing" their great need.
- **“SEEING JESUS”** The leper knew something of the Saviour and this motivated him to draw near and ask to be cleansed.
- **“A MAN FULL OF LEPROSY”** His was a desperate case. He had no hope of healing.
- His condition had prevented him from having contact with anybody, but he did go near the Only One who could change his deplorable situation.
- Before the leper drew close to Jesus, he was convinced of:
 1. His unclean condition.
 2. Jesus’ power to cleanse him.
 3. Jesus’ willingness to grant his petition.
- Cmt.** It would be good to point out the petition of the leper. He asked for **“CLEANSING.”**
- Apl.** It is necessary to emphasize the contaminating character of sin, which makes the sinner unfit to be in the presence of God.
- **“PROSTRATING HIMSELF”** The leper takes a humble position.
- **“IF THOU WILT”** There was no doubt in his mind that Jesus had the power to cleanse him. However, he casts himself on the Lord’s willingness to exercise His power and cleanse him.
- Sug.** It is important to point that God **‘IS NOT WILLING’** that any should perish. (2 Peter 3:9.)
 “The Lord ...is longsuffering to usward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance.”
- **“THOU CANST MAKE ME CLEAN”** He is conscious of his condition.
- Cns.** It is the blood of Christ, the Son of God, that cleanses the sinner. Christ’s death, his burial and resurrection is the only way by which a sinner can be cleansed from his sin and made fit for heaven.
- According to the law, anyone that touched a leper became unclean, but this did not occur when Jesus extended his hand and declared the man cleansed.
- The intervention of the Lord completely changed the leper’s life from that moment on.
- The touch of His hand shows that the man is already cleansed and Jesus identifies with him in his new state.
- The faith of the leper, which made him draw near to the Lord Jesus, resulted in his complete cleansing or healing.
- There was not a long recovery period, but he passed from being unclean to being clean immediately.
- Apl.** This is an example of 2 Corinthians 5:17 “Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new.



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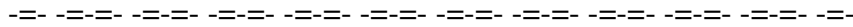


SCENE No. 3. VISUAL HELPS. (a) Figure of a man in front of a house with a barrier in place, hindering him access to the place. (b) Other figures of children looking through the Bible and (c) a figure representing Heaven.

DEVELOPMENT:

- A man finds himself barred from his home because of his sickness. How would he feel?
- The scene illustrates the reality of the sinner’s position. There is a barrier that prevents his access to Heaven, the place he wishes to enter.
- The children discover in the Bible that sin is the barrier preventing them entering Heaven. They also discover that God has made it possible for the barrier to be removed through the Lord Jesus Christ.
- Only the blood of the Lord Jesus Christ can cleanse us from all sin and make us fit to enter Heaven.

Cns. God can only accept worship and service from those who have been cleansed from their sin. Worshipping and serving God will be our eternal occupation in Heaven.



EPILOGUE

- Jesus asked the man not to mention the miracle to anyone, but instructed him to do what the law required, which meant he had to show himself to the priest who would declare him cleansed and free to enjoy his new life. Would the priest ask him how he became clean or free from the leprosy?
- When Jesus asked the man to tell no one of what happened, He was not looking for men’s praise. This is an example of Humility and Meekness.
- The man could not keep still about such a great miracle in his life.

Apl. Everyone that has been cleansed from their sins wants others to know about it.

- The fame of the Lord Jesus spread, especially since it was a miracle of a leper being cleansed and made completely well.

Jesus looked for a quiet place in the wilderness, perhaps near the area where He later performed another miracle, feeding the 5,000.

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ADDITIONAL INFORMATION – From a news release.

Japanese lepers awarded millions in compensation

Mon May 14 2001

TOKYO - The Japanese government was told to pay millions of dollars to 127 former leprosy patients who spent years locked in isolation centres.

Hundreds of former patients have sued the government for their treatment under the draconian Leprosy Prevention Law of 1953. It was only repealed in 1996.

The judge said the Health Ministry should have altered its policy by 1960. By then, drug therapy for leprosy had become effective enough to allow outpatient treatment.

Children as young as seven were among leprosy patients forced into the isolation centers.

The plaintiffs say the law violated their human rights and was unconstitutional.

Many of those who went into the centres never saw their families again, haunted by shame, often changing their names. Many remain in the treatment centres until they die, too ashamed to return home.

A spokesman said this week there were no human rights violations and the visits to the treatment centres were no different than a normal hospital stay.

Leprosy is a disfiguring illness that targets the skin and nerves. Hands, feet, the face and eyes are the most vulnerable parts.