

# Miracles in Mark

## Lesson 3 - Jesus Heals a Leper

### Mark 1.40-45

#### BACKGROUND & CONTEXT:

**LOCATION:** Galilee.

**TIME:** Before the calling of the 12 into apostleship  
Before the preaching of the Sermon on the Mount

#### CHARACTERS:

Jesus

The Leper

#### PARALLEL TEXTS:

Matthew 8.2-4 (*Note: miracles in Matthew 8.2-9.34 are arranged topically, not chronologically.*)

Luke 5.12-16

#### NOTES ON THE TEXT:

- Leprosy
  - Loathsome; dreaded; fearful; offensive; permanent; deadly
- The Leper
  - *Came to Him.* Close enough to be touched.
    - Compare Leviticus 13.45-46 - lepers were to dwell outside the camp.
    - Compare Luke 17.12 - lepers *stood at a distance.*
  - Demonstrates an amount of boldness/confidence & faith in who Jesus was.
  - Luke 5.12 says this man was *full of leprosy*. An advanced condition?
  - Approaches in a humble manner
    - Matthew 8.2 - addresses Jesus as "Lord."
    - Fully convinced that Jesus possessed power to cleanse
    - Was Jesus willing?
- Jesus
  - *Moved with compassion.* Lit: "moved within His inner being"
  - Of the three accounts, Mark is the only one who mentions Jesus' being moved with compassion.
    - Active sympathy
    - Jesus always took the condition of the afflicted ones to heart.
    - Our sorrows became His. See Isaiah 53.4
  - Miracle was instantaneous.
  - Jesus touched the leper. Law forbade this because lepers were unclean.
    - Hendrickson: Jesus regarded him as already being clean.
  - *I will* - statement that is manifest proof of Jesus' divine power. Jesus heals people by His own will - miracles were an exertion of His own power. He was divine.
- The warning of Jesus:
  - Does not want this publicized.
    - Why?

- Remember His purpose: To preach, bear the good news...not just a miracle worker.
- Enthusiasm about Jesus as a miracle worker could have led to a premature crisis.
  - His “hour” had not yet come.
- Instructs leper to go to priest for ceremonial cleansing.
  - Leviticus 14.1-7 - required offering was necessary.
  - Two clean, living birds. One was killed. The other bird was dipped in the dead bird’s blood & released.
  - Blood of slain bird sprinkled seven times over the man & then he was pronounced “clean.”
  - Just because this man was healed did not void God’s law on the matter.
- Actions of the leper - 1.45
  - Contrast 1.40 with 1.45. We see the best of this man contrasted with his worst.
  - Actions cause Jesus to retreat to the wilderness ... Jesus decides it best not to go into the towns.
    - Great crowds would have overwhelmed the towns
    - Civil authorities would have been displeased.
  - The crowds still seek Jesus in the wilderness.

#### FOR A 21st CENTURY AUDIENCE:

- **Jesus was a man of compassion and care.** We need to follow in His example.
  - “Active sympathy” (More than just words)
- **Two types of people:**
  - Those who wait until the messenger comes to them
  - Those who go out & find & hear the one who brings the message
- **Compare leprosy to sin. Jesus is the only cure.**
  - Sin is loathsome, offensive, dreaded, permanent (w/o forgiveness), and deadly. Just as a leper cannot cleanse himself, so we cannot cleanse our self from sin - without assistance from God.
- **Jesus freely poured out a wonderful blessing to a person who did not deserve it.**
  - This is true for everyone.