

Bible Study Guide for the Week of October 2, 2022

1. Read through the passage below
2. Read the notes and commentary
3. Read the questions at the end and ponder or discuss with people

Luke 17:11-19

11 On the way to Jerusalem Jesus was going through the region between Samaria and Galilee. 12 As he entered a village, ten lepers approached him. Keeping their distance, 13 they called out, saying, “Jesus, Master, have mercy on us!” 14 When he saw them, he said to them, “Go and show yourselves to the priests.” And as they went, they were made clean. 15 Then one of them, when he saw that he was healed, turned back, praising God with a loud voice. 16 He prostrated himself at Jesus’ feet and thanked him. And he was a Samaritan. 17 Then Jesus asked, “Were not ten made clean? But the other nine, where are they? 18 Was none of them found to return and give praise to God except this foreigner?” 19 Then he said to him, “Get up and go on your way; your faith has made you well.”

(11) On the way to Jerusalem Jesus was going through the region between Samaria and Galilee.

In Biblical times, Jews and Samaritans were like our northern siblings (aka “Yankees”) and the southern siblings (aka “Rednecks”). They weren’t on the greatest of terms. For Jewish traveler(s) if there was a way for them to avoid going to a Samaritan territory, they certainly tried. The reason being is that the Samaritans had different beliefs about where the dwelling place God chose was located. Also, Samaritans only read from the Torah unlike their Jewish cousins. It is curious that Jesus was in this “no-man’s land” on the way to Jerusalem. (Jesus crucifixion is impending in Luke 23). Jesus is not necessarily avoiding the Samaritans territory. Another factor is one pointed out in commentary where the author of “Luke contains the most references to Samaria and Samaritans, especially when we consider the entirety of his two-volume work (Luke-Acts).” With this verse it starts to foreshadow that all, even foreigners, are welcome in God’s kingdom.

(13) They called out, saying, “Jesus, Master, have mercy on us!”

Lepers were shunned when they found out they were “cursed” with the “finger of God”. They had very little if any contact with others. When word got to them about a man who heals the sick and says he is the Son of God, they can’t help but wonder. When they see that this man called Jesus is approaching their town, they cry out to him. If a leper tried to be sociable, often it was to ask for money. Here the lepers don’t ask for money or for healing, they ask for Jesus to have mercy on them. They not only took a leap of faith to cry out to Jesus, but they asked for Jesus to have mercy on them. Furthermore, they recognized the fact that Jesus was a prominent figure in addressing him as master or epistata. The lepers know Jesus is a prominent figure and can at the very least, recognize that they want Jesus to see them as humans not outcasts and welcome them into the kingdom of God.

(19) Then he said to him, “Get up and go on your way; your faith has made you well.”

Previously, we heard about the lepers being told to go and show themselves to the priests so that they may be announced they are clean and can join the community again. There are nine who

go but one leper sees he is healed and turns back and prostrates himself at Jesus feet. The lepers all take a leap of faith to be healed by Jesus when they cried out “have mercy on us” and now they are taking a leap of faith going to the priests before they’ve been healed. However, on the way to the priest, they are made whole, and one leper turns back. His faith has made him well. He can’t help but turn back and rejoice to the one who helped make him whole again. Thus, he turns back and celebrates at Jesus feet. It is here I see connections to the Martha and Mary event in Luke 10: 38-42. Martha is busy running around making and preparing dinner and being hospitable as was according to the social rules at the time. Mary is strengthening her faith at the feet of Jesus. Re-read the gospel lesson and the story of Mary and Martha and see how faith can be different and holy. In both stories, it shows us how our faith is strengthened at the feet of Jesus.

Discussion Questions

- 1. Have you ever had to take a leap of faith? Recall that situation and all your thoughts and feelings. Could you do it again? Would you do it again?**
- 2. What does Jesus show us when he extends healing to the lepers who are Samaritan and Jewish? How can we extend healing to those “foreigners” or those who are of animosity in our lives?**
- 3. How can we be different in celebrating our faith at the feet of Jesus?**