

International Bible Lessons Commentary

Luke 17:11-19

New Revised Standard Version

International Bible Lessons

Sunday, May 8, 2016

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The [International Bible Lesson](#) (*Uniform Sunday School Lessons Series*) for **Sunday, May 8, 2016**, is from **Luke 17:11-19**. **Questions for Discussion and Thinking Further** follow the verse-by-verse *International Bible Lesson Commentary*. **Study Hints for Discussion and Thinking Further** discusses *Questions for Discussion and Thinking Further* to help with class preparation and in conducting class discussion: these hints are available on the [International Bible Lessons Commentary](#) website along with the *International Bible Lesson* that you may want to read to your class as part of your Bible study. If you are a Bible student or teacher, you can discuss each week's commentary and lesson at the [International Bible Lesson Forum](#).

International Bible Lesson Commentary

Luke 17:11-19

(Luke 17:11) On the way to Jerusalem Jesus was going through the region between Samaria and Galilee.

This event takes place as Jesus is on His way to Jerusalem for the last time, and He is in an area where He will meet Jews, Samaritans, and others. As the Son of God, Jesus welcomed people no matter their racial or religious background in order to heal them, teach them, point them to the true God, give them the true interpretation of the Scriptures, and declare himself as their Lord and Savior.

(Luke 17:12) As he entered a village, ten lepers approached him. Keeping their distance,

Those with leprosy were physically unclean. To prevent the spread of leprosy the law of God required lepers to keep their distance from others and proclaim their uncleanness. Most Jews and many others considered the physical uncleanness of this disease a sign of a person's sinfulness and spiritual uncleanness. Their condition of leprosy brought these ten men of different racial and religious backgrounds together for companionship and mutual support (because at least one of them was a Samaritan). Obeying the law of God, they did not physically approach Jesus or the village, but called out to Jesus.

(Luke 17:13) they called out, saying, “Jesus, Master, have mercy on us!”

Perhaps they had seen Jesus before or had at least heard of Him. They did not see Jesus “by chance,” for Jesus came to seek and save those who are lost. From a respectful distance, they called out to Jesus by name “Jesus,” (His name means “rescue, deliver, God saves”). They also called Jesus their “Master,” which can also mean “commander, employer, or teacher.” They sought the compassion and mercy of Jesus; they knew they did not deserve His help. Whatever their need was, they wanted Jesus to meet their need. It was obvious to all that they were lepers, but they probably had other needs too. To ask Jesus for “pity” is to ask Him humbly to meet all the needs that He sees we have.

(Luke 17:14) When he saw them, he said to them, “Go and show yourselves to the priests.” And as they went, they were made clean.

Jesus knew they wanted healing, and they had called out to Him because they knew He had healed others. As far as we know from Luke, Jesus did not say anything except “Go, show yourselves to the priests.” Jesus upheld the true interpretation of the ceremonial laws as recorded in the books of Moses, which commanded people who had a skin disease to go to the priest for proper diagnosis (and possible treatment). If they were healed (or thought they were), they went back to the priest for a statement that they were or were not healed. Of course, in this case, they would tell the priest how Jesus had healed them. When they obeyed Jesus, He healed them physically. The faith they had in Jesus led them to obey Him, and they expected the nearest priest to declare that they were healed when they went to him as the law dictated.

(Luke 17:15) Then one of them, when he saw that he was healed, turned back, praising God with a loud voice.

A Samaritan who was healed came back to Jesus praising God with a loud voice (probably as loud as the one he had used when he asked Jesus for pity or healing). Luke does not tell us how far he got before he came back to Jesus; however, Jesus probably healed these ten men the very moment they took a step in obedient faith. Each man would have rejoiced mightily in their physical cleansing, but the Samaritan was so filled with joy that he felt moved to go back to Jesus praising God and to thank Jesus. His response indicated not only physical cleansing but also moral and spiritual cleansing as a result of his faith in Jesus. Having come to full faith in Jesus, the Holy Spirit moved him to praise and thank Jesus.

(Luke 17:16) He prostrated himself at Jesus’ feet and thanked him. And he was a Samaritan.

The Samaritan threw himself at Jesus' feet in adoring worship, which Jesus accepted as the Son of God. What Jesus had done for him inspired him to praise God and proclaim that Jesus was his salvation from his disease. The Samaritan could have gone to a Samaritan priest for validation that he was healed, but his faith in Jesus moved him to return to Jesus first, before Jesus had moved on to someplace else.

(Luke 17:17) Then Jesus asked, “Were not ten made clean? But the other nine, where are they?”

For the benefit of His hearers, Jesus pointed out the fact that He had cleansed all ten lepers; not one out of ten. He made clear to the crowd that He had healed all who had asked for healing and not just this one man who had returned to thank Him. The other nine who had been healed had not returned to give thanks to God in the presence of the One who had healed them. Not all who receive help from God and Jesus choose to thank God and Jesus for the help they have received, but instead go on to live their lives for themselves. Luke does not tell us what the other nine did, because the emphasis is upon the one who went to Jesus with praise and thanksgiving. Perhaps the other nine only wanted physical cleansing, while the Samaritan cried out in his heart for physical, moral, and spiritual cleansing, so Jesus cleansed him immediately and completely.

(Luke 17:18) Was none of them found to return and give praise to God except this foreigner?”

If the other nine had gone on to the priest praising and thanking God for Jesus' healing them, Jesus would probably have reported this fact in some way to the crowd. As it was, the Samaritan acted in accordance with the writings of Moses and praised God and thanked Jesus (no doubt led by the Holy Spirit). Jesus showed once again that many who were not Jews came to faith in Him and praised the true God, while many who were Jews did not give God the glory that God deserved or recognize Him as the Messiah.

(Luke 17:19) Then he said to him, “Get up and go on your way; your faith has made you well.”

The Samaritan was cleansed physically, morally, and spiritually by his faith in Jesus; a faith that he expressed in a loud voice praising God and thanking Jesus. He knew his body was well, and his spirit was made well too. As the King James Version states, Jesus made him “whole.” In the Greek New Testament, the word for “well” and “whole” can be translated “saved.” In other words, “Your faith has saved you.” Jesus had saved him and not just healed him physically, so he came back to praise God and thank Jesus for saving him. Not everyone Jesus healed physically came to saving faith in Him, but those Jesus healed physically had good and sufficient reasons to believe in Jesus as Lord and Savior.

Some only went to Jesus to have their physical needs met and to be healed, not to also have their moral and spiritual needs met; not also to repent and follow Him and His teachings. We do not know if this man later went to see a Samaritan priest or not, but we can be assured he continued to praise God and tell others what Jesus had done for him.

Questions for Discussion and Thinking Further

1. Do you think these ten lepers saw Jesus “by chance” and called to Him? Based on what you know about Jesus and the Bible, give a possible explanation for your answer.
2. The lepers called Jesus, “Master.” How important is it for those who say they believe in Jesus to call Him, “Master”? Give a reason for your answer.
3. In what situations might you pray to Jesus, “Have pity on me!”?
4. What can we do that indicates we have faith in Jesus?
5. Give thanks to Jesus for something you experienced in the past week.

Begin or close your class by reading the short weekly *International Bible Lesson*.
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