

PARABLE OF THE TEN LEPERS

Luke 17:11-19

Prepare to Hear the Word:

- This is a healing miracle story only found in Luke's Gospel
- In Jesus' time anyone who had a skin disease was considered a leper.
- The leper who came back to thank Jesus was a foreigner from Samaria, already an outcast in Jewish society.

You will need:

- 11 Puppets – Jesus and ten lepers
- Green felt base

When children are seated in a semi-circle ready to listen to the story, place the gold box/bag, containing the materials you will need, carefully beside you.

Lay out the felt and begin. Put the figure of Jesus on the felt.

This story comes from our special book, the Bible, so we know it will tell us something about God.

Add the ten lepers to the scene

Lepers were people who had terrible skin diseases – and a terrible life.

Put your hands between the lepers and Jesus to create a barrier.

Lepers were not allowed to live in the towns, because people were afraid of catching their disease. If anyone came near a leper, the leper had to warn the other person to go away. No one was allowed to touch lepers.

Move lepers towards Jesus one at a time.

One day, ten lepers called out to Jesus, and asked for his help. Jesus saw them and told them to go and show themselves to the priests.

Move lepers away from Jesus.

The priests were the people who had to say whether or not they were really healed. On the way to the priests, the lepers saw that they were cured. Jesus had healed them.

Move one leper to the figure of Jesus and have them facing each other.

One of the lepers, a foreigner from Samaria, came back to Jesus to say thank you. Jesus was surprised.

Even though ten had been cured, only one came back to say thank you.

*Ask the children if they have any **Wonder Questions**. Below are some starters.*

I Wonder:

- I wonder what it would have been like to be a leper and never be allowed to go near other people?
- I wonder why people were afraid of going near the lepers?
- I wonder how the lepers had heard about Jesus?
- I wonder how the lepers felt when they were healed?
- I wonder why the other nine lepers didn't come back to say thankyou?
- I wonder what the leper who came back, said to Jesus?
- I wonder what would you have said to Jesus?

Jesus Cleanses Ten Lepers

Luke 17:11-19

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

Prepare to Hear the Word:

Teacher

- This story appears in only one gospel, it is unique to Luke and fits in with Luke's openness and inclusiveness of Gentiles.
- There was animosity between Jews and Samaritans at the time of Jesus. Jesus does call the Samaritan who came back to thank him, a foreigner but nonetheless praises his faith.
- Jesus' involvement in this healing is very minimal. He simply sends the lepers to the priests who had to pronounce them clean so that they could take their place with their families in society again.
- They are all cured on the way but the Samaritan, the foreigner, comes back to thank Jesus.
- High and solid barriers separated lepers from the rest of society, so the Samaritan leper was thus doubly ostracised.
- Ironically the one who is the outcast is the one who truly realises the significance of being humanly whole again. The one least expected to is the one who shows gratitude.
- The focus of the story is not on the healing but the meaning and consequences of accepting the outcast, the marginalised and those on the edges of our societies - those with thankful hearts.

A Time of Jubilee – Using Luke's Gospel with Children Barbara Stead 1997