

## **PAST DUE ON PRAISE**

**Luke 17:12-19** <sup>12</sup> And as he entered into a certain village, there met him ten men that were lepers, which stood afar off: <sup>13</sup> And they lifted up their voices, and said, Jesus, Master, have mercy on us. <sup>14</sup> And when he saw them, he said unto them, Go shew yourselves unto the priests. And it came to pass, that, as they went, they were cleansed. <sup>15</sup> And one of them, when he saw that he was healed, turned back, and with a loud voice glorified God, <sup>16</sup> And fell down on his face at his feet, giving him thanks: and he was a Samaritan. <sup>17</sup> And Jesus answering said, Were there not ten cleansed? but **where are the nine?** <sup>18</sup> There are not found that returned to give glory to God, save this stranger. <sup>19</sup> And he said unto him, Arise, go thy way: thy faith hath made thee whole.

Leprosy was a fatal disease that literally terrified the people of ancient times. It appeared in various forms and stages of infection, but once it became malignant it was a terminal and debilitating condition. At this stage, the skin turned white and became numb, then began to erupt in nodules and ulcers. The limbs would swell and the hands and feet became distorted. The bones and internal organs would be affected as the disease spread, and gangrene usually resulted.

Leprosy was called **SARA'AT** by the Jews, meaning "a smiting or a scourge." There was no way to deal with infectious leprosy in ancient times other than to separate the sufferers from the general population ("outside the camp"). Leprosy's symptoms showed on the outside, but it was primarily an internal disease of the nerve endings. As the disease progressed, more and more damage was done to the body by the sufferer themselves, as their sense of pain became deadened.

### **LEPROSY IN THE BIBLE IS ALWAYS REGARDED AS A TYPE OF SIN!**

**Leviticus 14:2** This shall be the law of the leper in the day of his cleansing: He shall be brought unto the priest:

It appears that the Law of Moses regarding the cleansing of leprous individuals in Leviticus 13-14 had never been used before in Jewish history! (Yes, Naaman was healed of leprosy in 2 Kings 5, but he was not Jewish.) But suddenly, many lepers begin to come to the priests asking for cleansing ... and the priests have to dust off the ancient scrolls to relearn a ceremony they had never used. **Why? Because God is walking among men!**

All ten lepers receive a miraculous healing, but only one returns to thank Jesus ... and the Bible makes a point to tell us that he is a Samaritan and a stranger. Nine were Jews ... **they knew more, but did less!** It should have been those Jewish lepers that praised Jesus, not that Samaritan!

**WHERE ARE THE NINE?** The Jews had been abundantly blessed! Israel had been chosen from all the nations of the world so they could worship the one true God. They were privileged to be different than other people in their lifestyle, distinguished by peculiar laws, statutes, observances, diet and conversation. God gave them a tabernacle where they could offer sacrifices and celebrate feasts and festivals, and where His own Shekinah glory could dwell among them. He led them through the wilderness to the Promised Land, casting out all their enemies before them and miraculously providing for them. **Even a Jew with leprosy was blessed beyond measure! And a Jew healed of leprosy should have been a fanatical worshipper!**

**WHERE ARE THE NINE?** Pentecostals have been abundantly blessed! We have been chosen from every kindred, tongue, nation and people to worship the one true God whose name is Jesus! We are privileged to be different than other people in our lifestyle, and we don't mind in the least being distinguished by God's laws! God has given us a wonderful place to worship, where His Spirit dwells among us – and we are glad to go to the house of the Lord! God brought each of us out of sin and has given us abundant life and the power to conquer the enemy. We have a lot to praise God for! **Even a Pentecostal in the middle of the worst trial of their life is blessed beyond measure! And every Pentecostal who has been delivered from the leprosy of sin should be a fanatical worshipper!**

**IF ANYONE IS GOING TO PRAISE GOD TODAY, IT SHOULD BE US!** We're "one of the nine" ... we're not Samaritans, we're Jews. Why is it that people who know God less praise Him more? That shouldn't happen! That offends Jesus! That is a disgrace! **Pentecostals should lead in praise!**

### **I'M PAST DUE ON PRAISE – I COULD NEVER PRAISE HIM ENOUGH!**

There are 206 bones in my skeleton supporting me, but really it's God holding me up with His everlasting arms – **for this, I give Him praise!**

There are 600 muscles in my body allowing me to move, but really it's in Him that I live and move and have my being – **for this, I give Him praise!**

There are 2 million optic nerve cells in my eyes that let me see, but really it's God that has removed my spiritual blindness – **for this, I give Him praise!**

I have a heart the size of my fist that pumps 10,000 liters of blood every day, and there are 60,000 miles of blood vessels in my body, but really it's His precious blood that gives me life – **for this, I give Him praise!**

I have a brain weighing 3 pounds and 100 billion neurons in my central nervous system feeding me thousands of pieces of information every second, but really I only need to know that my Redeemer lives and sense that He's here in this place right now – **for this, I give Him praise!**

**Unlike the other 8.4 million creatures on this planet, human beings have the ability to speak the praises of God! WHERE ARE THE NINE?**

**Luke 19:39-40** <sup>39</sup> And some of the Pharisees from among the multitude said unto him, Master, rebuke thy disciples. <sup>40</sup> And he answered and said unto them, I tell you that, **if these should hold their peace, the stones would immediately cry out.**

**The Bible is filled with praise!** We don't apologize for our exuberance in worshipping God. We only apologize that more churches are not this way! With so many commandments in the Bible to praise God, who in their right mind could call themselves a Christian and not worship with exuberance?!

**Psalms 134:2** Lift up your hands in the sanctuary, and bless the Lord.

**Psalms 149:6** Let the high praises of God be in their mouth, and a twoedged sword in their hand;

**Psalms 118:1** O give thanks unto the LORD; for he is good: because his mercy endureth for ever.

**Psalms 122:1** I was glad when they said unto me, Let us go into the house of the Lord.

**Psalms 118:24** This is the day which the LORD hath made; we will rejoice and be glad in it.

**Psalms 84:10** For a day in thy courts is better than a thousand. I had rather be a doorkeeper in the house of my God, than to dwell in the tents of wickedness.

**And, just in case you don't "get it" yet, the final verse of Psalms says:**

**Psalms 150:6** Let every thing that hath breath praise the LORD. Praise ye the LORD.

If God decides to shut down Heaven, close down Hell, and stop everything cold at the edge of the grave ... I'm still ecstatically enthusiastic that I'm walking with Him through this life, I'm still going to praise Him because ...

**I'M PAST DUE ON PRAISE – I COULD NEVER PRAISE HIM ENOUGH!**

**For every mountain You brought me over  
For every trial You brought me through  
For every blessing, Hallelujah  
For this I give You praise!**

All ten of the lepers in Luke 17 were CLEANSED, but only one of them was MADE WHOLE – the one who returned to give praise to Jesus!

Many people here today have been CLEANSED from sin, but many of those same people are still miserable – why? Because they don't realize what praise does for the child of God! As we enter into the presence of God, time after time after time, we are MADE WHOLE – literally made into His image!

When God wanted to create a tree, He spoke to the earth – that's why a tree cannot exist apart from the soil.

When God wanted to create fish, He spoke to the sea – that's why a fish cannot exist apart from the water.

When God wanted to create man, He spoke to Himself (!) – and that's why man cannot exist apart from the presence of God!

When David writes in Psalm 103 that we should "bless the Lord" he is not just saying that we bless the Lord because of past benefits. He is also telling us that AS WE BLESS THE LORD, we actually walk in the benefits of praise! (forgiveth, healeth, redeemeth, crowneth, satisfieth)

**Psalms 103:1-5** <sup>1</sup> Bless the LORD, O my soul: and all that is within me, bless his holy name. <sup>2</sup>Bless the LORD, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits: <sup>3</sup>Who forgiveth all thine iniquities; who healeth all thy diseases; <sup>4</sup>Who redeemeth thy life from destruction; who crowneth thee with lovingkindness and tender mercies; <sup>5</sup>Who satisfieth thy mouth with good things; so that thy youth is renewed like the eagle's.

David uncovers the secret to silencing the enemy in Psalm 34. If you want to make the enemy look SMALL, then make God look BIG with your praise. **PRAISE DOESN'T CHANGE GOD'S POWER, IT CHANGES YOUR PERSPECTIVE!** So we need to continually "magnify" the Lord in praise!

**Psalms 34:1-4** <sup>1</sup> I will bless the LORD at all times: his praise shall continually be in my mouth. <sup>2</sup>My soul shall make her boast in the LORD: the humble shall hear thereof, and be glad. <sup>3</sup>**O magnify the LORD with me, and let us exalt his name together.** <sup>4</sup>I sought the LORD, and he heard me, and delivered me from all my fears.

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