

The Character of Jesus 60
Healing Ten Lepers
Luke 17:11 – 37

- Characteristic: Exposing apathetic expectations
 - (12) Lepers were required to stay away from others (Leviticus 13:45 – 46). How far away from others they were required to stay is not stated in the Law, so various rabbis had different distance, ranging from 10 cubits to 100 paces.
 - (13) Mercy: a request to fix the problem.
 - (14) “As they went”: they were healed after they started on the way to be inspected. The rules for being declared free of leprosy may be found in Leviticus 14:1 – 32, which included several inspections, shaving, and sacrifices.
 - (16) The practices for being declared clean in Samaria, at the temple in Sychar (John 4:5, 20 – 21), are unknown, although they likely paralleled the Law of Moses.
 - (17) Jesus seems miffed that only one came back to say, “Thank-you.”
 - (20) Assuming that this section has connection to the recounting of the healing of ten lepers, the overall point would be that people tended to shortchange their faith, focusing on the physical benefits of the kingdom.
 - (21) Literally, the kingdom “is within you.” This could be a reference to the indwelling Spirit or to the miracles that happened among them, probably both. The point is the same as with the lepers. The majority will focus on the healing, so will not have a true change of heart.
 - (22) The event style would change when the kingdom came.
 - (23) When the kingdom did come, they were not to stay enamored of the flashiness of the time of Jesus.
 - (24) When the kingdom comes, it will flash across the whole world.
 - (25) Before the kingdom comes, Jesus will suffer and be rejected.
 - (26 – 30) Just like times when the preaching of Noah (2 Peter 2:5) and Lot (2 Peter 2:7 – 8) was ignored, don’t expect a big turnout.
 - (31 – 35) Most apply this to the destruction of the Temple in 70 AD and the unilateral cease-fire of Titus during which Christians left Jerusalem safely. Other apply it to the Rapture. However, the field illustration does not fit with 70 AD (a siege). Rather, it is an illustration of responding immediately when the kingdom comes, not waiting for a planned transition. This does not fit with the Rapture doctrine either, since people are said to be snatched up; they would have no choice in the matter.
 - (37) The type of bird is a carrion-eater. Some argue over vultures versus eagles (a symbol of Rome). Both ideas fit, so Jesus probably meant both. The kingdom will come amidst a lot of death, with a hint that Roman troops would be involved.
- Application: Exposing apathetic expectations
 - What fraction of those who are forgiven focus on the personal benefit rather than thanksgiving. How can we improve the ratio?
 - What draws people to various representations of the kingdom? How can we improve the focus on what is internal?
 - Concerning the fraction which tries to reproduce the times of Jesus or the early church, what will they miss? How to we change that desire?

- What fraction who come to the kingdom plan out the steps of that transition? How do we impart that sense of immediacy, defeat the desire to look back?
- Does the carrion image have application today?