

## **Ten Lepers**

Luke 17:11-19

by Don Falkos

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Jesus was on his way from Galilee, in the north, to Jerusalem, in Judea, in the south. Normally he would have taken the direct route right through Samaria. But Jews and Samaritans had never gotten along, and the people Jesus was traveling with, because of their prejudices, insisted on going the long way round. So Jesus was walking along the border between Galilee and Samaria when he encountered a group of ten men. These men all had leprosy, a terrible, contagious skin disease. They kept their distance, but they cried out, "Jesus, Master, have mercy on us."

Jesus looked at them – really looked at them – and said, "Go. Show yourselves to the priests and offer the appropriate sacrifices."

While they were on their way to find the priests, they were healed. The leprosy was gone. One of the men, when he saw what had happened, turned around and went back shouting praises to God. When the man found Jesus, he fell to his knees and thanked Jesus again and again. This man was a Samaritan.

Jesus turned to his traveling companions and, addressing their prejudice against this Samaritan, he said, "Weren't there ten men who were healed? Where are the other nine? Has no one come back to praise God and offer thanks except this despicable, half-breed foreigner?" Then to the Samaritan Jesus said, "Get up and go on your way. Your faith has healed you."