

Mattityahu 8

- 8:1 After Yeshua had come down from the hill, large crowds followed him.
2 Then a man afflicted with a repulsive skin disease came, kneeled down in front of Him and said, "Sir, if you are willing, you can make me clean."
3 Yeshua reached out his hand, touched him and said, "I am willing! Be cleansed!" And at once he was cleansed from his skin disease.
4 Then Yeshua said to him, "See that you tell no one; but as a testimony to the people, go and let the Cohen examine you, and offer the sacrifice that Moshe commanded."

v 2

'repulsive skin disease' Usually translated as leprosy, but many non-leprosy skin diseases were categorized as such. This may not have literally been Hansen's disease, which is leprosy.

One suffering from leprosy was considered as dead. Talmud Nedarim 64b

Vayikra (Leviticus) 13:46 All the days wherein the plague shall be in him he shall be defiled; he is unclean: he shall dwell alone; without the camp shall his habitation be.

Restoring the dead to life was the greatest of all feats. Talmud Sanhedrin 47a

'kneeled down' Gr *proskuneo* prostrated himself.

'Sir' Gr *kurios* lord. Heb *adonai*

'if you are willing' Have you ever been touched and healed by haShem? Tell someone about it.

'make me clean' Heb *l'taher* to pronounce one clean

There is a suggestion this means the man was asking Yeshua to declare his leprous state was over, but Yeshua directed him to see the priests for that function.

While this attempts to eliminate the miracle healing, it is interesting to note even this explanation shows Yeshua's dedication to Torah, by His telling the ex-leper to follow the proscribed steps to be declared clean.

v3

'Yeshua...touched him' This is forbidden under B'midbar (Numbers) 19:22 And whatsoever the unclean person toucheth shall be unclean; and the soul that toucheth it shall be unclean until even.

Also, Vayikra (Leviticus) 5:3 Or if he touch the uncleanness of man, whatsoever uncleanness it be that a man shall be defiled withal, and it be hid from him; when he knoweth of it, then he shall be guilty.

Also Vayikra 7:21 Moreover the soul that shall touch any unclean thing, as the uncleanness of man, or any unclean beast, or any abominable unclean thing, and eat of the flesh of the sacrifice of peace offerings, which pertain unto the LORD, even that soul shall be cut off from his people.

This brings up an interesting question: did Yeshua defile himself by touching the leper? No, if:

- (a) the leper was healed **before** contact was made, or
- (b) the holiness and 'cleanness' of Yeshua overrides the defilement of the leprosy.

By touching him, Yeshua showed the cleansing had already taken place. What was lacking was the priest's confirmation of the healing.

v4

'tell no one' Not that Yeshua was hiding, as some have suggested.

If a person were to simply say "I am clean", he would not be believed. But, if he made that declaration to the Cohanim and was confirmed clean, his testimony of Who healed him would have great effect.

'go and let the Cohen examine you' in obedience to vaYikra (Leviticus) 14:1-32

The testimony produced by observing the ritual of cleansing would publish throughout Jerusalem that Messiah has come!

It was established in tradition that only Messiah could do certain things: raise the dead, heal a man born blind, and cleanse a Jewish leper (which had not been recorded since Miriam in the exodus). By proving his cleansing to the Cohen and declaring Yeshua healed him, this would send shock waves through the religious community in Jerusalem and tell them Messiah has indeed come.

'and offer the sacrifice that Moshe commanded'

Some may teach Yeshua established a new religion or eliminated Torah, but this clearly proves His support and loyalty to Torah, and confirmation of its validity!