

Mark 1:40

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And there came a leper to him, beseeching him, and kneeling down to him, and saying unto him, If thou wilt, thou canst make me clean.

Analysis

The leper's approach violates Levitical law (Lev. 13:45-46) requiring isolation, yet his faith overrides legal caution. His posture—'kneeling down'—demonstrates worship and recognition of Christ's authority. The conditional 'if thou wilt' acknowledges God's sovereignty in healing while expressing confidence in His power. This models proper prayer: humble, submissive to divine will, yet bold in approaching Christ.

Historical Context

Leprosy (Hebrew: *tsara'at*) encompassed various skin diseases rendering one ceremonially unclean and socially isolated. Lepers were required to cry 'Unclean!' when approaching others and live outside settlements. The leper's desperate approach to Jesus risked stoning for breaking quarantine.

Related Passages

Ephesians 2:8 — Salvation by grace through faith

Romans 10:9 — Confession and belief for salvation

Study Questions

1. How does the leper's willingness to break social norms demonstrate the priority of seeking Christ above all else?
2. What does 'if thou wilt' teach us about balancing confidence in God's power with submission to His sovereign will?

Interlinear Text

καὶ ἔρχεται πρὸς αὐτῷ λεπρὸς παρακαλῶν αὐτῷ καὶ
And there came to him a leper beseeching him And
G2532 G2064 G4314 G846 G3015 G3870 G846 G2532

γονυπετῶν αὐτῷ καὶ λέγων αὐτῷ ὅτι Ἐὰν θέλης
kneeling down him And saying him If thou wilt
G1120 G846 G2532 G3004 G846 G3754 G1437 G2309

δύνασάί με καθαρίσαι
thou canst me clean
G1410 G3165 G2511

Additional Cross-References

Matthew 17:14 (Parallel theme): And when they were come to the multitude, there came to him a certain man, kneeling down to him, and saying,

2 Samuel 3:29 (Parallel theme): Let it rest on the head of Joab, and on all his father's house; and let there not fail from the house of Joab one that hath an issue, or that is a leper, or that leaneth on a staff, or that falleth on the sword, or that lacketh bread.