Jesus Heals Ten Lepers

Ten men with leprosy cry out to Jesus for mercy. All are healed, but only one—a Samaritan—returns to give thanks.

Luke 17:11-19

CHARACTERS: Jesus, The ten lepers, The thankful Samaritan
THEMES: Healing, Gratitude, Faith, Outcasts, Worship

AS JESUS TRAVELED along the border between Samaria and Galilee, He was going into a village when ten men who had leprosy met Him. They stood at a distance—as the law required, for lepers were considered unclean and had to stay away from healthy people.

They called out in a loud voice, 'Jesus, Master, have pity on us!'

When Jesus saw them, He said, 'Go, show yourselves to the priests.' This was the procedure prescribed by the law for anyone healed of leprosy—the priest would examine them and declare them clean.

As they went, they were cleansed. Their diseased flesh became whole. Their fingers and toes, perhaps disfigured or lost to the disease, were restored. They were healed.

One of them, when he saw he was healed, came back, praising God in a loud voice. He threw himself at Jesus' feet and thanked Him—and he was a Samaritan, one of the people Jews despised.

Jesus asked, 'Were not all ten cleansed? Where are the other nine? Has no one returned to give praise to God except this foreigner?'

Then He said to him, 'Rise and go; your faith has made you well.'

Ten were healed. One was made whole—not just in body but in soul. The nine received a physical blessing and went on their way. The one who returned received something greater: a relationship with the Healer. Gratitude brought him back into the presence of Christ, and there he found what he truly needed.

The story asks each of us: Are we among the nine, or the one?