

THE LEPER CLEANSED.

Mark 1: 40-42

I'd say I had been good all my life.
Attended the synagogue as regularly as anyone,
Loved my neighbour,
Done more than my fair share of kindly deeds.
And been blessed with a happy marriage and sons.

All changed in a day.
One of those days you remember everything distinctly, as it happened, to the second.
I'd just finished washing, was drying myself off, when I noticed the signs.
The immediate reaction of disbelief, then mesmeric stare:
And then the creeping fear that began to overwhelm me even before acceptance rooted itself in my thought.
I had got leprosy and there was no known cure.

*

I've been in the leper village for nearly a year.
Allowed to venture out, but rarely wanted to.
There were others far worse off than me, some recently joined.
I felt for them. Nothing to look forward to but worsening health and an early grave.
Release from pain.

Why has God condemned me so?



What sin did I commit that I now have to shout "Unclean"?
Each time I utter those words it's like a stake driven into my heart.
Each time I ring my wretched bell, it only serves to mock me more:
"This man is a leper, untouchable, stay away. He's no good.
Unclean....unclean..."
How does one live if all hope is gone?

We hear the rumours about a new prophet who has been healing people of all kinds of diseases.

Jesus of Nazareth.

Some are calling him the Messiah that was promised.
Someone has come to the camp, saying he's passing by not a few miles away.
My heart leaps. I think of my wife, my sons, my lost life and life to be.
I clutch my bell, wrap round my wounds, and seek where to go.

I'm the only one that asks, and pray to God to guide me.

Some two hours later, hot and uncomfortable, I see a gathering of people coming towards me.
"Unclean... Unclean..."

My bell rings out and seems to cut through the noise of the day.
The crowd in front of me holds back.
I am offending custom by drawing near to them.
One man keeps walking towards me.
I break the laws of leprosy as I head towards him, my words a plea for healing.
Unclean....unclean....
Dear God, he walks towards me still!



There is love in his eyes, no fear, no alarm, just quietness and assurance that gives me a hope I thought I'd never have.

“Jesus, Jesus,” (for it can only be him!) *“I beg you, have mercy!”*

I kneel down at his feet.

My diseased face looks up at him, imploring, knowing:

“If thou wilt, thou canst make me clean.”



He reaches out with his hand! and I feel his gentle touch. No one had dared touch me for more months than I could remember. But what touches me more is the compassion that flows out from his very being: like a stream of living water, unstoppable, pure, bathing me in purity and love. It is as though time has stopped still as the recognition of the Christ power now present eradicates all that was past, and forms me anew. I suddenly see that he has no fear because there is nothing in his experience to cause fear. He is at one with his Father and his tender touch is an open invitation to share that sense of unity with him and with God. His God and my God! I too realise there is nothing to fear. Everything to love.

His words mirror his actions and what I now feel.

“I will. Be thou clean.”

The leprosy is no more! Full fair flesh where ugliness had been. Transformed in the instant of that touch, transformed indeed for me to touch in turn that life eternal, a life at one with God, at one with Spirit, in which evil does not exist or hold sway. I had sought healing, and have been given dominion. No longer full of fear, but full of Love.

*

I had glimpsed the ever-presence of the Christ-consciousness. My cleanliness absolute, all sensation of materiality washed away with the purity and balm of true Spirit and what I now see and know as infinite Love.

All changed in a day.

One of those days you remember everything distinctly, as it happened, to the second. Immediately!

“I will. Be thou clean.”

Let this be your day! Your moment!

Who shall separate us from the love of Christ?

Romans 8:35(to?)

If the Scientist reaches his patient through divine Love, the healing work will be accomplished at one visit, and the disease will vanish into its native nothingness like dew before the morning sun-shine.

S&H 365:15-19