

## 28 Sunday OT – Luke 17:11-19

Still on the road to Jerusalem, Jesus meets ten lepers, and they cry out to him for mercy. Jesus did not reject their request. They are typical of so many in Luke who encounter his compassion for those whom society rejected. He cured them, or rather they went to the priests as the law demanded and found themselves cured.

This story, like that of Elisha and Naaman, has a sequel. One of the lepers saw beyond his cure to the God who through Jesus made it possible. He turned back, praised God, and expressed his gratitude. But he was no ordinary foreigner; he was a Samaritan, one of those who do not associate with Jews.

The narrative concludes with three questions of Jesus. “*Where not ten made clean?*” Nine of them disappeared; they did not see beyond their healing. The word of Jesus had already been taken from their hearts, whether by Satan or through their inability to think beyond the present. “*Where are the other nine?*” Jesus was expecting, waiting for them, like the father looking out for his son.

“*Were none of them found to return and give praise to God except this foreigner?*” The point of the physical healing of Jesus was to lead to spiritual healing, to a turning around, a change of direction in repentance. Encountering the mercy of God should move to the praise of God. The nationality of the man fulfilled the program that Jesus had proclaimed in the synagogue at Nazareth and anticipated the successful mission of Philip to the Samaritans and of the disciples to the ends of the earth.

Anyone looking on would realize that a miracle had happened. Ten lepers asked Jesus **for mercy**. Remember they were not healed at first. Only when they **were on the way** to show themselves to the high priests, then they were cleansed of their leprosy. This is important because they believed and then headed for the high priests. One might say, they received the word of God through Jesus, like the seed tossed by the Sower. Where did it land? Every week we come here to hear the word of God.