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<sup>[15]</sup> Now one of them, when he saw that he had been healed, turned back, glorifying God with a loud voice, <sup>[16]</sup> and he fell on his face at His feet, giving thanks to Him. And he was a Samaritan. <sup>[17]</sup> And Jesus answered and said, "Were there not ten cleansed? But the nine, where are they?" <sup>[18]</sup> Was no one found who turned back to give glory to God, except this foreigner?" <sup>[19]</sup> And He said to him, "Rise, and go your way; your faith has made you well."  
[Luke 17:15-19]

Today's Thought on *A Sacrifice of Thanksgiving* begins in Luke 17:12 when as Jesus enters "a certain village, ten leprous men who stood at a distance met Him". These ten lepers "raised their voices, saying, 'Jesus, Master, have mercy on us!'" [Luke 17:13]. Then, when Jesus "saw them, He said to them, 'Go and show yourselves to the priests.' And it came about that as they were going, they were cleansed" [Luke 17:14].

As I prayed and meditated on this event, four lessons came to my mind. The first is Jesus' question of "Were there not ten cleansed? But the nine, where are they?" All ten of these men had the same need. The law of leprosy given by God was that the one with leprosy was to be sent away from the camp or city. This was so that they would "not defile" the camp or city [Numbers 5:2-3]. These also were to 'tear' their clothes, and uncover the hair of their head, and they were to cover their mustache and cry, "'Unclean! Unclean!'" [Leviticus 13:45]. These were considered as "unclean all the days during which they had the infection"! They were to live alone; outside the camp or city [Leviticus 13:46]. In short these were outcasts from society and their families. So, when these ten "raised their voices, saying, 'Jesus, Master, have mercy on us!'" [Luke 17:13] they recognized that Jesus could give them the *GREAT BLESSING* of release from their disease and reunion with their friends and families.

However, only one of these ten realized the *GREATNESS* of the *BLESSING* they received. Only the one returned to give an offering of *THANKSGIVING* to Jesus the One Who healed them all. This is why Jesus asked, "'the nine, where are they'" [Luke 17:17]. The nine were doing what Jesus told them to do. They were on the way to "Go and show" themselves "to the priests" [Luke 17:14]. Jesus was amazed that these Israelites, the people of God received this *GREAT BLESSING* but were not thankful in their hearts. How many blessings from God have you received but have never gone to Him in prayer to give Him an offering of *THANKSGIVING*. I will admit I have been guilty of this many times through the years.

The second lesson I learned was that as Jesus declared, it is our *FAITH* that brings *BLESSINGS* to the requests we make in prayer. Remember Jesus said it was the Samaritan's *FAITH* that "'made" him "well" [Luke 17:19]. The nine had enough *FAITH* to ask for "mercy" but not enough *GRATITUDE* to offer a sacrifice of *THANKSGIVING* [Luke 7:13]. These with *SELFISH EAGERNESS* accepted the *GREAT BLESSING* but did not give *THANKS* to the *GREAT ONE* Who had *BLESSED* them!

The third lesson I learned was *HUMILITY*! Only one returned and "fell on his face at" Jesus' "feet giving thanks to Him. And he was a Samaritan" [Luke 17:16]. I say the lesson I learned was *HUMILITY*, because to fall at the feet of someone face down requires a *HUMBLE* spirit. This Samaritan realized the *GREATNESS* of the *BLESSING* he had received, and it *HUMBL*ED him and

made him *GRATEFULLY THANKFUL* for what God had done for him. Have you received the *BLESSINGS* God has given you with a *THANKFUL* heart or have you just taken them for granted?

The fourth lesson I learned was a greater understanding of what it means to be *THANKFUL*. Look again at Luke 17:15 and look closely at what the Samaritan leper did when he realized his leprosy was cleansed. Did you see it? He did not just go back to *THANK* Jesus. As he "*turned back*" and was returning to *THANK* Jesus he was "*GLORIFYING God*"! However, he was not just "*GLORIFYING God*", he was "*GLORIFYING God*" with a *LOUD VOICE*! He wanted all to know what God had done for him! In his example I learned that being *THANKFUL* to God, Jesus, and the Holy Spirit is not just saying "I thank You" in my prayers.

True *THANKFULNESS* came to me when I came to realize the *GREATNESS* of the *BLESSING* with which God has *BLESSED* me. It is only then that I could begin to *GLORIFY God*" with a *LOUD VOICE*, telling others what God has done for me! It is only then that I began to *HUMBLE* myself and fall on my face at His feet and express the *THANKFUL GRATITUDE* I have in my heart!!!

Will you please pray with me as we close Today's Thought and offer to God our *SACRIFICES* of *THANKFULNESS*?

Father God, I humbly come before You now, bowing at Your feet and offering You this sacrifice of thanksgiving in prayer. I thank You that You have humbled me and shown me, and now are showing those who are praying with me today the greatness of the blessings You have given us in Christ Jesus. I ask that You teach us to humble ourselves each and every time we come before Your Throne. Teach us to pause and reflect on the greatness of the blessings with which you have blessed us. Then accept our prayers of thankfulness as a sacrifice to You. With thanksgiving in my heart, I ask this in the power and authority that is in the name of Jesus Your Son. Amen!

Please meditate and pray on these things!

Louise and I pray this will help to both enlighten and encourage you to **know in a greater way** the **One** promising in His Word to never leave you or forsake you [Hebrews 13:5; Deuteronomy 31:6, 8]!

*BECAUSE I WANT TO BE ONE WHO RETURNS TO GIVE A SACRIFICE OF THANKSGIVING! – tom*