

**40-42. 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. And Jesus, moved with compassion, put forth His hand, and touched him, and saith unto him, I am willing; be thou clean. And as soon as He had spoken, immediately the leprosy departed from him, and he was cleansed.** The leper had both faith and understanding, so he did not say, "If Thou ask God," but, "If Thou wilt," believing in Him as God. Christ touches Him to show that there is nothing that is unclean. For the law forbade one to touch a leper, as he was unclean. But the Saviour touches the leper, showing that nothing is unclean by nature and that man ought to be set free from the observances of the law, and that these observances applied only to man and not to God. Remember that Elisha had such reverence for the law that he could not endure to see, let alone touch, Naaman who was a leper asking for healing.<sup>19</sup>

**43-45. And He sternly charged him, and forthwith sent him away; and saith unto him, See thou say nothing to any man: but go thy way, show thyself to the priest, and offer for thy cleansing those things which Moses commanded, for a testimony unto them. But he went out, and began to publish it much, and to blaze abroad the matter, insomuch that Jesus could no more openly enter into the city, but was without in desert places: and they came to Him from every quarter.** By this as well we are taught not to make a show when we do good to someone. See how the Lord Himself commands the man who had been cleansed not to spread His fame. Yet He knew that the man would not obey, but would tell all. Nevertheless He commands him to say nothing, as I have said, teaching us not to boast. Still one must be grateful and thank one's benefactor, even if the benefactor does not desire it. For though the Lord had forbidden him, the leper told everyone of the good thing that had been done to him. The Lord sends him to the priest. For the law decreed that unless the priest declared the former leper to be clean, he was not permitted to enter the city, but was to be driven away. Jesus also commands him to offer the gift which those who had been cleansed were supposed to offer, so that the gift might be testimony that

<sup>19</sup> IV Kings (II Kings) 5:12

Jesus was not opposed to the law. On the contrary, He held it in such high regard that He Himself commanded the very things that were prescribed by the law.