

Do We Do Well?

Northwest Baptist Church



Lepers

- Leviticus 13:45-46 says: “The leper in whom the plague is.... shall cry unclean, unclean....He shall dwell alone without the camp.”
- He was an outcast until he died, unless the priest announced him cleansed.



Can Be Saved By The High Priest

- Leviticus Chapter 14 tells us:
 - The leper shall be brought to the high priest for cleansing.
 - The leper shall be presented to the Lord.
 - A lamb's blood shall be applied.
 - If the priest announced him clean, then he was healed of leprosy and allowed to return to the camp.



Leprosy

- Leprosy, also known as Hansen's Disease, is active today in our modern world.
- It is a chronic infection caused by a bacteria called *Mycobacterium leprae*.
- Leprosy causes severe skin lesions on the body, arms, legs, and face.
- Leprosy is very ugly.

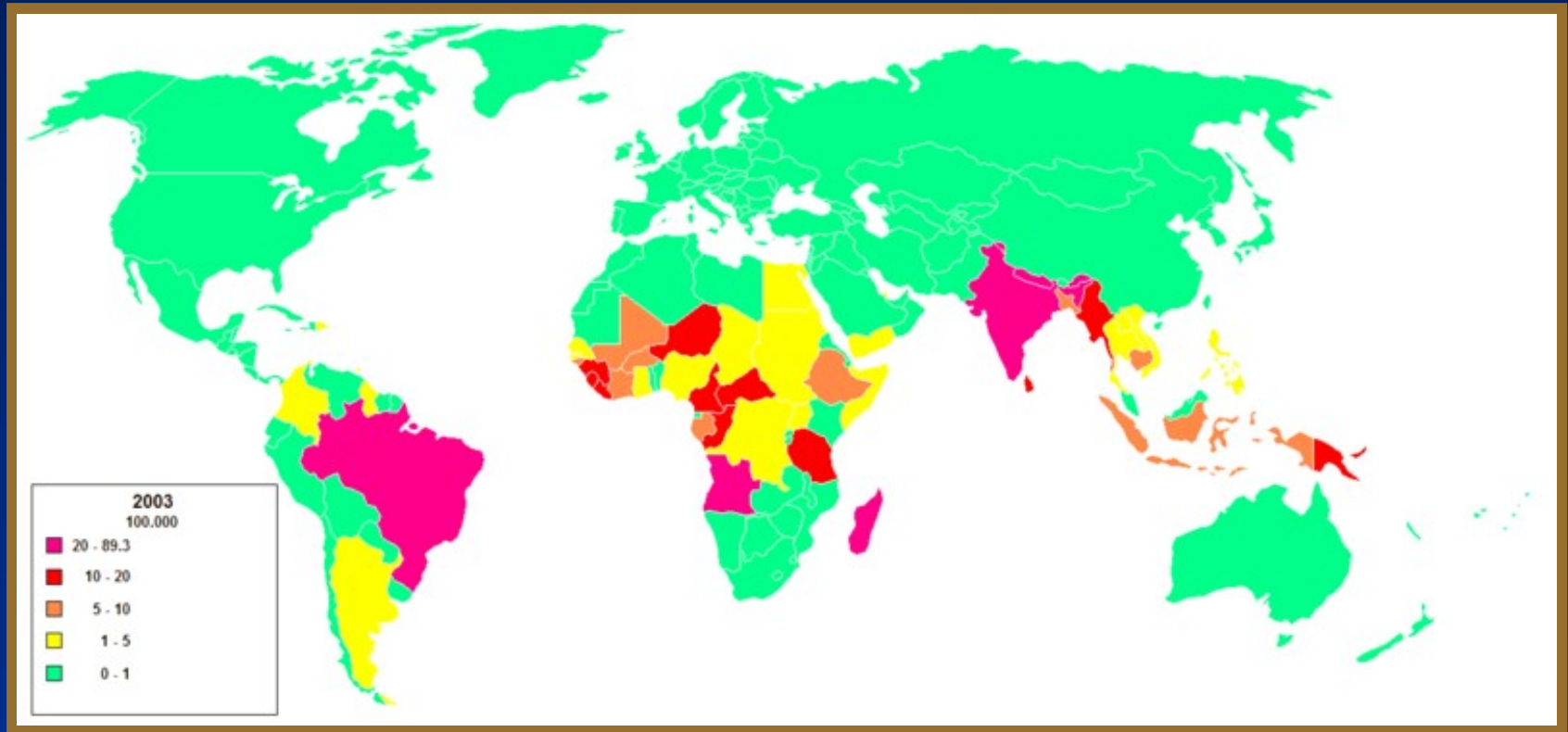


Leprosy Today

- The World Health Organization (WHO) puts the number of identified leprosy cases in the world at about 600,000. Seventy percent of all cases are found in three countries: India, Indonesia, and Myanmar (Burma). There are about 5000 reported cases in the United States, most of which involve immigrants.



Leprosy In The World



Leprosariums

- Leper colonies, called Leprosariums, still remain around the world
- India has more than 1,000 leper colonies
- There are leprosariums today in China, Romania, Egypt, Nepal, Somalia, Liberia, Vietnam, and Japan.



Samaria Surrounded By Army

- II Kings 6: 24
 - “And it came to pass, after this, that Ben-hadad, king of Syria, gathered all his host, and went up and besieged Samaria.”



Samaria Under Siege

- A siege is when that, rather than attack, you surround the city and keep the enemy from getting supplies in an attempt to force the enemy to give up without a fight.



Samaria Surrounded

- Scholars estimate Ben-hadad had as many as 100 thousand soldiers surrounding Samaria.
- King Ben-hadad's army could get food outside the city, but they would not allow food into Samaria.



A Great Famine

- II Kings 6:25
 - “And there was a great famine in Samaria: and, behold, they besieged it, until an ass’s head was sold for fourscore pieces of silver...”



God Was Blamed

- The messenger came and said that this evil famine is of the Lord. (II Kings 6:33)
- Hear the word of the Lord. (II Kings 7:1)



God Was Blamed

- Thus says the Lord. Tomorrow at this time a bag of flour will sell for a small amount of money in the gate of Samaria.
- The messenger's prophecy indicated that the famine would be over, and no more death.



The King Mocked God's Word

- II Kings 7:2
 - “Then a lord on whose hand the king leaned answered the man of God and said, Behold, if the LORD would make windows in heaven, might this thing be?”
- Elisha, God's preacher in Samaria said:
 - “Behold, thou shalt see it with thine eyes, but shalt not eat thereof.”



Why Sit Here Until We Die?

- II Kings 7:3
 - “And there were four leprous men at the entering in of the gate: and they said one to another, why sit we here until we die?”



Lets Go and Do Something

- II Kings 7:4-7
 - If we say, we will enter into the city, then the famine is in the city, and we shall die there: and if we sit still here, we die also.
 - Now therefore come, and let us fall unto the host of the Syrians; if they save us alive, we shall live: and if they kill us, we shall but die.



God Intervened

- II Kings 7:5
 - “And they rose up in the twilight to go unto the camp of the Syrians; and when they were come to the uttermost part of the camp of Syria, behold there was no man there.”



The Lord Can Take Care Of It

- Kings 7:6-7
- The Lord made the host of the Syrians to hear a noise
- “...wherefore they arose and fled”
- “...and left the camp as it was.”



The Enemy Fled in Haste

- The enemy fled so quickly, that they left huge amounts of food and valuables.
- The lepers had a feast, eating and drinking all that they could.
- Then the lepers took and hid loads of money, valuables and rich clothing for themselves.



We Do Not Well

- As the four lepers sat to think about their abundance of food and wealth, they realized something was wrong.
- Those in the city were still starving to death. They were captive to what they thought was an army surrounding them.
- Ben-hadad and his army were gone, but the people in Samaria did not know this.



There Was No One To Tell Them

- God had run off the enemy, but the captives did not know they were free.
- The enemy had left a huge amount of food just outside the city, but those starving to death did not know food was nearby.
- Salvation was available, but no one had taken that message to them.



Good Tidings, But We Don't Tell

- II Kings 7:9
- “Then they said one to another,”
- **“We Do Not Well”**
- “This day is a day of good tidings, and we hold our peace; come, that we may go and tell the king’s household.”



The Lepers Took The Good News

- The lepers went to the city and told those on the guard that the enemy camp was deserted. Food and riches were within reach that day.
- The guard told the King but he was suspicious. The story did not make sense.
- It could not be that easy to be saved.



Some Believed The Report

- “They went out and discovered the way of salvation and the riches that God had made available.” (II Kings 7:14-16)
- When the King realized the story was true, he sent his people from the city to take the food and valuables of the enemy.



Prophecy Fulfilled

- The preacher of God had said that God would end the famine in one day. The preacher said that you no longer would pay 80 pieces of silver for a donkey head, but less than one dollar for a bag of flour.
- Just as the preacher said, “A measure of flour sold for a shekel ...according to the Word of God.” (II Kings 7:16)



Hundreds of Fulfilled Prophecies

- There are hundreds of prophecies in the Bible. Some scholars say thousands.
- If you just take the prophecies about Israel and no others, there are an amazing number of prophecies that should not have come true, but they miraculously have.



Like A Parable

- Christ in the Old Testament concealed is in the New Testament revealed.
- Luke 24:27
 - “And beginning at Moses and all the prophets, he expounded unto them in all the scriptures the things concerning himself.”
- The Old Testament examples were for us to understand the coming Savior.



The Priest Applied The Lamb's Blood

- In The Old Testament, in II Kings, the one with leprosy could go to the high priest, who would cleanse the leper, by the blood of the lamb and the oil.



Christ The Highest Priest

- Hebrews 7:17
 - “For he testifieth, Thou (Christ) art a priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec.”



Christ Heals Leprosy (Sin)

- Hebrews 7:26
 - “For such a high priest became us, who is holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners, and made higher than the heavens”



Leprosy Pictures Sin

- The lepers in the Old Testament said:
“Unclean, unclean.
- Isaiah 64:6
 - *“But we are all as an unclean thing...”*
- Leprosy is a picture of sin, it is unclean.
- All have sinned. All, in a sense, are lepers.
- We all need cleansing by the High Priest.



Jesus Heals The Lepers

- Mark 1:40
 - *“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.”*



Jesus Heals The Lepers

- Here was a leper, desperate for healing. He realized that Jesus was his only hope, and he turned to Him in faith, knowing that this High Priest had the power to heal him and make him clean.



Leprosy A Picture of Sin

- The lepers were considered the worst of society. They were not allowed in the camp. They were to live on the outskirts of society and had to admit they were unclean.



Leprosy A Picture of Sin

- Like the lepers, all we like sheep have gone astray. All have sinned and come short of the glory of God. Without Christ we are all as unclean lepers.



Leprosy (sin) Is Ugly

- It is 'ugly' to see a person dying of lung cancer from tobacco use.
- It is 'ugly' to see a drunkard laying on a street corner in Seattle, clutching a wine bottle
- It is 'ugly' to see a young people choose the path of sin, and rebellion to their own hurt and regret.



Leprosy and Sin Are Ugly

- It is “ugly” to see what bitterness, pride, anger and self-indulgence can do to destroy families and churches.
- It was “ugly” on September 11, 2001 when our nation was attacked and nearly 3,000 souls perished.
- I looked for pictures of people with leprosy to show you, but they were too ugly.



Leprosy and Sin Are Ugly

- That is how God sees sin before we are cleansed by the High Priest through the blood of the Lamb.
- 1 John 1:7
 - “But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin.”



What Changed The Lepers

- The lepers had no hope, until God provided a miracle in their life.
- Without Christ, we have no hope. A miracle of God saved the lepers and provided riches beyond imagination.



What Changed The Lepers

- I Corinthians 2:9
 - “But as it is written, Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him.”



If We Stay Or Go Back We Die

- The lepers had nothing to look forward to except death.
- It is appointed once for man to die.
- The average life span in America is about 76.
- We are all headed for death. Subtract your present age from 76 and that is roughly how much of your life is left.



If You Go Talk to The Enemy You Die

- You might find it hard to give others the Gospel. It was harder for the lepers.
- Lepers were the last ones anyone wanted to come talk to them about anything.
- The lepers were afraid to go talk to the enemy. We are afraid to go talk.
- God intervened to make the enemy harmless to the lepers.



God Drove Off The Enemy

- A miracle of God saved the lepers and those they took the “gospel” to.
- Our greatest enemy is death.
- “He must reign, until he has put all enemies under his feet.” (1 Corinthians 15:25-26)
- The last enemy that shall be destroyed is death. Leprosy is a slow death of the flesh.



God's Miracles Saved Us

- Christ was miraculously raised in a virgin womb.
- Christ was miraculously raised from a virgin tomb.
- Christ our High Priest shed the blood of the Lamb to pay for our leprosy of sin.
- If we go to our high priest he saves us from our leprosy and pronounces us clean.



Many Doubt The Story

- The lepers' story was doubted by most, but a small group entered the gate to see the truth of salvation.
- Many find it hard to believe that Christ really died for our sins, was buried, and rose again the third day, according to the scriptures.



Leprosy Starts Out Small

- The disease of leprosy started off as a barely noticeable sore, which increased in size and depth until it eventually corrupted the whole being. What began as a small sore gradually spread throughout the whole body. In time, every member suffered from this encroaching disease.
- Sin works the same way.



The Lepers Found The Bread of Life

- The lepers found food made available by a miracle of God to save them.
- Christians today have the bread of life. We do not have to worry about death from a spiritual famine. We have eternal life.
- But there are so many others who do not know this truth. If no one tells them they will perish.



Not Everyone Believed

- When the lepers came to tell the good news, the hearers were skeptical.
- When they looked into the matter, they saw that the lepers were telling the truth.
- Those that believed the testimony of the lepers were happy that the lepers had given them the Good News.



Time Was Running Out

- Those in the city did not have much time left.
- In a short time there would have been no need to take the message to them.
- They were all near death – for them it was the ‘end times’.



God's Word Is Life

- “And he humbled you and suffered you to hunger...that he might make you know that man does not live by bread alone, but by every word that comes out of the mouth of God.” (Matthew 4:4)
- “How sweet are thy words to my mouth. Yes, sweeter than honey.” (Psalm 119:103)



Famine of the Word of God

- “Behold, the day will come says the Lord God, that I will send a famine in the land, not a famine of bread...but a famine of hearing the word of the Lord.” (Amos 8:11-12)
- “They shall go from sea to sea...to seek the word of God and shall not find it.”



We Are Feasting In The Church

- We are feasting on the word of God.
- Living the Christian way has brought us riches in Christ Jesus.
- Today is a day of abundance.
- But “**we do not well**”, if we do not seek to tell others about God’s plan to save today’s lepers from famine and death.



What Is Coming

- “...you say that you are rich, and increased with goods and have need of nothing; and know not that you are wretched and miserable, and poor...”
(Revelation 3:17)



What Is Coming

- Without Christ, all are as those in the city of Samaria, on the way to death, poverty, misery and torment for eternity, unless someone gets to them with the message.



Outside The Camp

- In II Kings, the lepers had to live outside the camp until cleansed by the high priest.
- Our high priest has prepared us a place in heaven, but there are many not allowed in the camp, because they are unclean.
- We need to tell them about the cleansing blood that washes away their leprosy and makes them white as snow.



Saved The Day They Heard

- When the lepers took the Gospel (good news) to the lost and dying people, some acted and were saved the same day. They did not put it off.



Saved The Day They Heard

- II Corinthians 6:2
 - “For he saith, I have heard thee in a time accepted, and in the day of salvation have I succoured thee: behold, now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation.”



Summary

- “**We do not well**; this day is a day of good tidings, and we hold our peace...”
- Northwest Baptist Church is emphasizing visitation and soul winning. Invite all you can to come to be fed on the Word of God and to share in the riches of Christ Jesus.
- Take the Gospel to friends and family who are starving in a world near death .

