

"Rabbi." It is possible that they knew of the story told in Matt. 8. 2.

14. When he saw them. His sympathies were aroused by their forlorn condition. **He said.** Perhaps he shouted across the hundred paces. **Go show yourselves unto the priests.** The law of Rev. 14. 2, was made to prevent the return of the leper to society before he was really cured; he must be officially examined and pronounced clean. They did not need, however, to go to Jerusalem; in no case would the Samaritan leper go there; if he went to a temple at all he went to the temple on Mount Gerizim; and the Jews could go to any priest in any town, who would inspect and decide on the completeness of the cure. The command for these lepers to start on their journey to the priests was an implication that they were cured; but the probability is that they did not yet recognize the cure by any sense, and that there was no touch or ceremony to sustain their faith. Suddenly the weariness departs from their frames and their

flesh becomes like the flesh of infants. Their faith had proved equal to the test, and God's salvation equal to their faith.

15, 16. With a loud voice glorified God.

(9) *We should likewise give God public praise for sin forgiven.* **He was a Samaritan.** Dr. Plumptre says, "Possibly the nine leprosy Jews thought it was more their duty to show themselves to the priest than to thank the healer, while with the Samaritan the impulse of gratitude was more than ceremonial observances." The "loud voice" and the prostration on the ground are in keeping with the demonstrative oriental character.

18. Stranger. Man of another race, alien. (10) *The deepest seated and most universal of all human vices is ingratitude.*

19. Go thy way. To the priest, without whose certificate he could not be restored to social and religious life. **Hath made thee whole.** Literally, Hath saved thee.

CRITICAL NOTES.

BY PROFESSOR R. J. COOKE, D.D.

Verse 5. And the apostles said. This is the only instance when the twelve are separated from the "disciples." **Increase our faith.** Better, give us more faith, with the idea of intensity in its quality included. The extraordinary command in verse 4 revealed to them the lack of loving faith, and their prayer is that the Lord would give them such faith in the present acting grace of God that, with confidence in it, they might also have faith in the effects of applied goodness. He who considers humanity as essentially and incorrigibly corrupt and has no patience with its failures and shortcomings is always mistaken in his conclusions, since he leaves the presence of God among men out of the count.

6. If ye had faith as a grain of mustard seed. The faith the Lord spoke of was that kind of faith he had, that kind which puts one in perfect touch with God, which gives one a clear vision of God, of the sublime moral purpose of God in his creation, and thus places one superior to all material, earthly things and conditions. This faith is not for personal power, nor is the exercise of the power arbitrary. God does not surrender the government of the universe to anyone, and he who has this faith will never use it otherwise than as God would use his power, for such faith in its essence is the perfection of reliance on the will of God. Faith is not merely belief; it is moral purpose directed and applied by love. If it were possible for one to have faith so that, as the apostle says (1 Cor. 13), he could remove mountains and yet have no love in the purpose of it, the use of it would amount to nothing at last. Back of all lasting power is love. **This sycamine tree.** A

tree found in Egypt and Palestine having fruit resembling a fig tree, and leaves like those of the mulberry. But the kind of tree is not to be noticed; the sublime truth would have applied to any other object.

7. Will say unto him by and by. This should be, "Will say unto him when he is come from the field, Go," etc. The theme of conversation between the Lord and his chosen twelve was forgiveness of offenses; and, incidentally, faith. In order to fulfill the requirements of the Lord they asked for more faith, whereupon he employs the illustration in this verse. But where is the connection? Where is the point in the illustration? It lies, we think, in the idea of duty set forth in the illustration. It is as if our Lord had said: "You want more faith to obey this commandment (verse 4), as if without it you could not obey, and if you did have this faith and exercised this forgiving spirit, that you would thereby do something meritorious. Nothing of the kind. Forgiving men is your natural duty—that virtue is an ordinary element in natural religion. When you forgive men and love in the forgiving, then a Christlike quality is given to your act. But when you have thus lifted your act into the atmosphere of vital religion, even then you have only done your duty as Christians. You are entitled to no reward for merely doing what you ought to do. Where, then, comes in reward? By grace!"

11. The midst of Samaria and Galilee. This has given some trouble because these provinces are named in the reverse of their geographical position. **Through the midst** must be understood between the two countries.

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