mere sanitary regulations is out of the question. The fact of its non-contagious nature  
has been abundantly proved by learned  
men, and is evident from the Scripture  
itself: for the priests had continually to  
be in close contact with lepers, even to  
handling and examining them. We find  
Naaman, a leper, commanding the armies  
of Syria (2 Kings v. 1); Gehazi, though a  
leper, is conversed with by the king of  
Terael (2 Kings viii. 4, 5); and in the  
examination of a leper by the priest, if a  
man was *entirely* covered with leprosy, he  
was to be pronounced clean (Levit. xiii.  
12, 18). The leper was not shut out from  
the synagogue, nor from the Christian  
churches. Besides, the analogy of the  
other uncleannesses under the Mosaic law,  
e.g. having touched the dead, having an  
issue, which are joined with leprosy (Num.  
v. 2), shews that sanitary caution was not  
the motive of these ceremonial enactments,  
but a far deeper reason. This disease was  
specially selected, as being the most loath-  
some and incurable of all, to represent the  
effect of the defilement of sin upon the once  
pure and holy body of man. “Leprosy  
was, indeed, nothing short of a living death,  
a poisoning of the springs, a corrupting of  
the humours, of life ; a dissolution, little  
by little, of the whole body, so that one  
limb after another actually decayed and  
fell away.” (Trench on the Miracles,  
p. 218.) See Num. xii. 12. The leper was  
the type of one dead in sin: the same emblems are used in his misery as those of  
mourning for the dead : the same means of  
cleansing as for uncleanness through connexion with death, and which were never  
used except on these two occasions. Compare Num. xix. 6, 13, 18, with Levit. xiv.  
4—7. All this exclusion and mournful  
separation imported the Perpetual exclusion  
of the abominable and polluted from the  
true city of God, as declared Rev. xxi. 27.  
And David, when after his deadly sin he  
utters his prayer of penitence, ‘ Purge me  
with hyssop, and I shall be clean,’ Ps. li.  
7, doubtless saw in his own utter spiritual  
uncleanness, that of which the ceremonial  
uncleanness that was purged with hyssop  
was the type. Thus in the above-cited  
instances we find leprosy inflicted as the  
punishment a rebellion, lying, and presumption. ‘I put the plague of |  
in an house’ (Levit. xiv. 34), ‘ Remember  
what the Lord thy God did to Miriam’  
(Deut. xxiv. 9), and other passages, point  
out this plague as a peculiar infliction  
from God. “The Jews termed it ‘the  
finger of God,’ and emphatically ‘The’  
stroke.’ They said that it attacked first  
a man’s house; and if he did not turn,  
his clothing; and then, if he persisted in  
sin, himself. So too, they said, that a  
man’s true repentance was the one condition of his leprosy leaving him.” Trench,  
. 216. The Jews, from the prophecy Isa.  
iii. 4, had a tradition that the Messiah  
should be a leper.

**worshipped him** ]  
“*falling on his face*,” Luke v.12; ‘‘*kneeling to him*,” Mark i. 40. These differences  
of expression are important. See beginning of note on this verse.

**Lord**] Not  
here merely a title of respect, but an expression of faith in Jesus as the Messiah.  
“This is the *right* utterance of ‘ *Lord*,’  
which will never be made in vain.” Stier.  
When Miriam was a leper, ‘‘ Moses cried  
unto the Lord, saying, Heal her now, O  
God, 1 beseech thee,” Num. xii. 18.

**3. touched him**] He who just now expansively fulfilled the law by *word and  
commands*, now does the same by *act and  
deed*: the law had forbidden the touching  
of the leper, Levit. v. 3. It was an act  
which stood on the same ground as the  
healing on the Sabbath, of which we have  
so many instances. So likewise the prophets Elijah and Elisha touched the dead  
in the working of a miracle on them  
(1 Kings xvii. 21: 2 Kings iv. 34). The  
same almighty power which suspends  
natural laws, supersedes ceremonial laws.

Here is a noble example illustrating  
His own precept so lately delivered, ‘Give  
to him that asketh thee.’ Again, we can  
hardly forbear to recognize, in His touching  
the leper, a deed symbolic of His taking on  
him, touching, laying bold of, our nature.  
The same remarkable word is used in the  
Greek in Luke xiv. 4, “and **taking hold**  
of him, he healed him,” and in Heb. ii. 16,  
“He **taketh** not **hold of angels**, but he  
**taketh hold** of the seed of Abraham.”

**4. See thon tell no man**] Either  
(1) these words were a moral admonition,  
having respect to the state of the man  
(teaching him not to boast and seek  
admiration,” **as** Chrysostom), for the injunction to silence was not our Lord’s  
uniform practice (See Mark v. 19, || L.),  
and in this case they were of lasting  
obligation, that the cleansed leper **was** not .