50 ST. MATTHEW. . VIII   
 8 And Jesus put forth his   
 thou canst make me clean.   
 hand, and touched him, saying, I will; be thou clean.   
   
 And immediately his leprosy was cleansed. 4 And Jesus   
 saith unto him, See thou tell no man; but go thy way,   
 mere sanitary regulations out of ques- (Deut. xxiv. 9), other passages,   
 tion. The fact of non-contagious nature out this plague as a peculiar infliction   
 has been abundantly proved by learned from God. “The Jews termed it ‘the   
 men, and is evident from the Scripture finger of God,’ and emphatically ‘The’   
 itself: the priests had continually to stroke.’ They said that it attacked first   
 be in close contact with lepers, to a man’s house; and if he did not turn,   
 handling and examining them. We find his clothing; and then, if persisted in   
 ‘Naaman, a leper, the armies sin, himself. So too, they said, that a   
 of Syria (2 Kings v. Gehazi, thongh a man’s true repentance was the one con-   
 leper, is conversed with by the king of dition of leprosy him.” Trench,   
 Terael (2 Kings viii. 4, 5); and in the . 216. The Jews, the prophecy Isa.   
 examination of a leper by the priest, a iii. had a tradition that the Messiah   
 man was entirely with iy, he should be a leper. worshipped him }   
 was to be pronounced clean (Levit. xiii. “falling on face,” v.12; ‘‘kneel-   
 12, 18). The leper was not shut out ing to him,” Mark i. These differences   
 the s e, nor from the Christian of expression are important. See begin-   
 churches. jesides, anal of the ning of note on verse. Lord] Not   
 other uncleannesses the Mosaic here merely a title respect, but an ex-   
 e.g. having touched the dead, havin; pression of faith Jesus as the Messiah.   
 issue, which are with leprosy (Num. “This is the right utterance of ‘   
 v. 2), shews sanitary caution was not which will never be made in vain.” Stier.   
 the motive of these enactments, When Miriam was a leper, ‘‘ cried   
 but a far deeper This disease unto the Lord, saying, Heal her now, O   
 specially as being the most loath- God, 1 beseech thee,” Num. xii.   
 some and incurable of all, represent the 8. touched him} He who just now ex-   
 effect of defilement sin the once pansively fulfilled law by word and   
 pure and holy body of man. ‘Leprosy commands, now does the same by act and   
 was, indeed, short of living deed: the law had forbidden the touching   
 ® poisoning of the a corrupting of of the leper, Levit. 3. It was an act   
 the humours, of ; a dissolution, which stood on the same ground as the   
 by little, the whole body, so that one healing on the Sabbath, of we have   
 limb after another actually decayed and so many instances. So likewise the   
 fell away.” (Trench on the Miracles, phets Elijah Elisha touched the dead   
 p. 218.) See Num. xii. The leper was in the working of a miracle on them   
 the type of one dead sin: the same em- (1 Kings xvii. 21: 2 Kings iv. 34). The   
 blems are used in his misery as those of same almighty power which suspends   
 mourning for the : the same means of natural laws, supersedes ceremonial laws.   
 cleansing as for through con- Here is a noble illustrating   
 nexion with death, and which were never His own precept so lately ‘Give   
 used except on these occasions. Com- to him that asketh thee.’ Again, we can   
 pare Num. xix. 6, 18, with Levit. xiv. hardly forbear recognize, His touching   
 4—7. All this exclusion and mournful the leper, a symbolic of His taking   
 separation imported the exclusion him, touching, laying bold of, nature.   
 of the abominable and polluted from the The same remarkable word is used in the   
 true city of God, declared Rev. xxi. Greek in Luke xiv. 4, hold   
 And David, when after his deadly sin he of him, he healed him,” in Heb. ii.   
 utters his prayer penitence, me “He taketh not hold of angels, but he   
 with hyasop, and I shall clean,’ Ps. taketh hold of the seed of Abraham.”   
 7, doubtless saw in own utter spiritual 4. Bee thon tell no man] Either   
 uncleanness, that which the ceremonial (1) these words were a moral admonition,   
 uncleanness that was purged with hyssop having respect to the state of the man   
 was the type. Thus in the above-cited (teaching him not to boast and seek   
 instances we find leprosy inflicted the admiration,” as Chrysostom), for the in-   
 punishment a rebellion, and pre- junction to silence was not our Lord’s   
 sumption. ‘I put the plague of | uniform practice (See Mark v. 19, ||   
 in an house’ (Levit. xiv. ‘ Remember and in this they were of lasting