



STORY

Jesus Heals the Paralyzed Man - Matthew 9:1-8; Mark 2:1-12

TEACHER PRAYER

Dear Father in heaven, the world around us offers so many alternatives to You to deal with sin and sickness. Help us to learn that God alone has the real solutions to these problems. Help me to be Your spokesman to tell my students to look to You alone for complete forgiveness of sins through Jesus' blood and righteousness. Teach us to be persistent and not let obstacles keep us from bringing our needs to You for the best solution. Trusting in Jesus, I pray, Amen.

VOCABULARY

His own city - Jesus used Capernaum as a base of operations at times. He had not received a good welcome in His hometown of Nazareth.

Blaspheme - claiming to be God when not truly God, or misusing the name of God in a false or sinful way, insulting God.

Scribes - originally men who copied the Scriptures by hand. But as their knowledge of the scriptures grew from their work, they were considered authorities of it and were regarded as "professors of theology" are today. They held high positions in the religious government of the Jews. (See Rupprecht pp. 47-48)

Paralytic (KJV) - a person who has no movement in some or all of the body.

OUTER AIM

Jesus heals a paralyzed man.

INNER AIM

Jesus has the power and authority to forgive sins.

BACKGROUND

(Rupprecht Bible History References Vol.2, pp. 137-142)

There are many kinds of sicknesses today. Some of these are very serious. Everyone tries to find a cure for disease. The thing that is not understood is that sickness is a result of sin, of man's rebellion against his Creator-God. Because of this, it was necessary for Jesus to fulfill the prophecy of Isaiah (Is. 53 and Matthew 8:17), "He took up our diseases and carried our illnesses." In this episode, Jesus made the connection between sin and sickness and showed that He had power to heal both.

Mark 2:1

- ▶ Jesus traveled throughout Galilee and in the regions on both sides of the Sea of Galilee.
- ▶ According to Matthew 9:1, this event happened when Jesus returned to the west side of the Sea of Galilee, after serving on the east side for a time.
- ▶ News about Jesus' location rapidly traveled about because at this time He was very popular with the people. *Use map to find Sea of Galilee and Capernaum.

v. 2

- ▶ People quickly came to hear Jesus and be healed by Him.
- ▶ This time the crowd was so thick that people were crowded outside the house to hear Him.
- ▶ Jesus did not waste the opportunity to preach.

v. 3

- ▶ The friends of a paralyzed man brought him to Jesus.

v. 4

- ▶ In testimony to their faith, these people did not let the crowd discourage them from their goal.
- ▶ They went up outside stairs onto the flat roof. Roofs were made either of branches and mud or else clay tiles. (see Rupprecht pp. 138-139)
- ▶ So with some effort they were able to open up the roof above Jesus to lower the bed of the man down to Jesus.
- ▶ The bed was portable, perhaps a stretcher or cot-like bed.

v. 5

- ▶ Jesus, as both God and man, knows the thoughts and intents of the heart. Jesus knew what was most important to the sick man, but calling him "son," Jesus shows His love for the man, and indicates His saving relationship with this man through the forgiveness of sins..
- ▶ More than healing of any diseases or sickness, people need to have their sins forgiven. Matthew 9:2 adds, ".. be of good cheer, .." for the forgiveness of sins brings peace and joy to replace sorrow over sin.

(Many have had the misconception that a specific sickness is a direct cause of a particular sin. Although some sicknesses can be the consequences of sinful behavior, sickness is one of the results of all people being sinful. No matter how unusually good they and we are, we and they will continue to suffer ailments until the end of this sinful world.)

vs. 6-7

- ▶ On scribes, see vocabulary. The scribes became jealous enemies of Jesus and audited His public appearances in order to find fault with Him. They thought within themselves that only God had the authority to forgive sins but failed to believe that Jesus was God. So they thought Jesus was blaspheming by claiming to do something that only God had the power and authority to do.
- ▶ Ironically, they became the ones blaspheming because they denied Jesus had the power of God.

v. 8

- ▶ Even before they had a chance to criticize Jesus, Jesus knew what was in their hearts and answered their thoughts!
- ▶ In a demonstration that He was God, He asked them why they thought such things (and by implication, why they didn't believe He was God).

v. 9

- ▶ Jesus' asked a reasonable question: which impossible thing is easier for a man to do?
- ▶ Directly forgiving sins and healing a paralyzed man with only a spoken word are things only God is able to do.

vs. 10-11

- ▶ To show them that He, as God, had the power of God to do what only God could, Jesus commanded the paralyzed man to arise.

v. 12

- ▶ And immediately, without a long recovery period or months in therapy, the man who had been paralyzed got out of his bed, picked up his bed, and walked (maybe even ran) to his house. Amazing!
- ▶ That would be our reaction too if we had been there.
- ▶ And the people glorified God, saying "We never saw anything like this." Or as Matthew says, glorified God for giving such power to mankind. Note that the people realized the supremely astounding truth

that God had indeed given the authority to forgive sins to people (note: plural “men,” not just to a man, Jesus of Nazareth. This is a prelude to the giving of the Keys – John 20.

- ▶ This miracle highlighted for the scribes and the people that Jesus' power was God's.
- ▶ Yet not all would believe in Him even after this and other miracles.

STUDENT PRAYER

Dear Lord, Jesus, You show us through Your Word today Your great power over sin and sicknesses. When our sins trouble us, draw us in faith to You for the forgiveness that You alone can give so that we may find peace and joy through sins forgiven. And when sickness comes upon us, give us a patient faith to continually come to You in faith. And when we are healed may Your name be glorified before those who doubt You. We pray, trusting in Your grace and mercy, Amen.

PRESENTATION

Briefly review previous story as time allows. Make links to the new story when possible.

Tell the story: Teachers, be encouraged to tell the story in your own words while remaining faithful to the scriptural account. When scripture records the story in more than one place, harmonize the accounts (including extra details found in each account.) Let the students know where they can find the additional details in the Bible.

Discuss the story: While reviewing the major events of the story, discuss the possible applications to the students' lives. Ask questions that make them think about the story and show that they understand the story.

APPLICATIONS

1. Jesus knows and is able to take care of our greatest ailment: sin. He searches our hearts in order to bring comfort to those who need assurance of sins forgiven and to instruct those who need to learn more about Jesus. The sicknesses and needs of the body are not as dangerous and permanent as our spiritual condition. So Jesus meets our spiritual needs first.
2. Jesus also is concerned about our physical needs. The world and its storms are restrained by His power so that they can do only what God allows. Sometimes, as the disciples and the paralyzed man discovered, God demonstrates His loving power so that people may end up glorifying Him. Usually God works in natural ways: adults work and earn money to buy us food, clothing and a home. Doctors are given skills and medicines to use to heal and repair us when we are sick or hurt. God gives people knowledge to predict storms and to protect themselves from them. We can plant gardens and crops where God grows food for us. But because these support systems are imperfect we are made to realize that He alone can help. When we are in need, we should look to Jesus alone in confidence and trust. 1 Peter 5:7
3. Jesus proved He is true God by His power to forgive sins. In John 20:23 Jesus gives His Church the authority to forgive sins on His behalf. Every Christian has the power given them by Jesus to announce or withhold the forgiveness of sins. We can forgive the sins of the penitent sinner or the impenitent sinner is stuck with his sins as long as he doesn't repent.

PASSAGES

These passages can be assigned as memory work or simply discussed in class as to how they fit the lesson.

Lower

1 Peter 5:7 - casting all your care upon Him, for He cares for you.

1 John 1:7 - ..the blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanses us from all sin.

Middle any of the above and...

Matthew 11:28-29 - "Come to Me, all you who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take My yoke upon you and learn from Me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls."

Upper any of the above and...

Romans 3:23-24 - for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, being justified freely by His grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus,

HYMN CHOICES

"O Faithful God, Thanks be to Thee" (TLH #321 *can change tune*)

"When in the Hour of Utmost Need" (TLH #522)

"Alas, My God, My Sins are Great" (TLH #317 - 1, 4-6)