



Lesson 230

Jesus Heals a Paralyzed Man

Story Elements

- **Text:** Mark 2:1-12 (also Matt. 9:1-9 and Luke 5:27-32)
- **Setting:** circa AD 27 in Capernaum, Galilee
- **Characters:** God, Jesus, a paralyzed man and his four friends
- **Plot:** The Savior demonstrates his deity by not only healing a paralytic but also forgiving sin.
- **Key word(s):** “ _____ ” – This word is the cause of the paralytic’s happiness and the Pharisees’ hatefulness.
- **Climax:** *Mark 2:9* *Whether is it easier to say to the sick of the palsy, Thy sins be forgiven thee; or to say, Arise, and take up thy bed, and walk?* With this question the Savior **traps** his critics with logic: they cannot dismiss Christ’s miracle; they should not deny his mercy.

Five Determined Men

1. **REVIEW:** The Savior’s holiness and power was demonstrated when he cleansed a leper of his terrible disease. Afterward, the fame of Jesus spread with great intensity, so much so that, for a while, it became impossible for him to enter into any city because of the thronging crowds. (cf. mark 1:45)
2. (vv 1-2) Returning again to Capernaum, Jesus returns to a home (possibly _____) and begins to teach the people that gathered to him.
3. (vv 3-4) Four men who carried a paralyzed friend on a bed (like a stretcher) were unable to come to the inside of the house because of the immense crowd that overflowed into the street. Believing Jesus could heal their friend, they were determined to bring him into the Savior's presence.
 - (a) Since admission to Jesus was impossible from the ground, the determined men sought access from the _____.

NOTE→ To comprehend the story, it’s helpful to understand the architecture of the typical ancient house in Israel: the homes had flat roofs that were accessible by an exterior staircase; additionally, most houses had enclosed courtyards that could be covered and uncovered to serve different purposes.¹ Edersheim gives an explains that “it would have been comparatively easy to ‘unroof’ the covering of ‘tiles,’ and then, ‘having dug out’ an opening through the lighter framework which supported the tiles, to let down their burden ‘into the midst before Jesus.’ All this, as done by four strong men, would be but the work of a few minutes.”²



- (b) They lowered the paralyzed man down from the roof, hoping against hope that Jesus would heal.
4. (v 5) Jesus *saw their faith* – not just the faith of the paralyzed man, but of the persistent helpers.

APPLICATION→ True faith overcomes obstacles because it believes fully in the power of Christ. Can you think of other examples in the gospels of people who would not be dissuaded from their pursuit of Christ?

¹ Image by SieBot. <https://www.worldhistory.org/image/2880/four-room-house-model/> (CC BY SA).

² Alfred Edersheim, *The Life and Times of Jesus the Messiah* (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1971) 503.

Three Amazing Miracles

5. (vv 5-7) "A threefold miracle demands our attention in these verses."³
- (a) The first miracle is the Savior **forgiving of sin**. Jesus said to the man, *Son, thy sins be forgiven thee*.
 - i. That Jesus said this before he declared healing emphasizes that man's greatest need is spiritual wholeness through Christ's redemption. All diseases of the body are the result of the sin sickness of the soul.
 - ii. No doubt, too, that the palsied man felt that his condition was the result of some individual sin (the common view of the day). His tortured conscience would be relieved by these words of the Savior before his palsied body would be _____.
 - (b) (vv 8-10) The second miracle is the Savior **reading the thoughts of men**.
 - i. The Scribes and Pharisees in attendance were incensed that Jesus would forgive sin. They thought *who can forgive sins but God only?* Once again, these doctors of the law were only partially right. Matthew Henry notes, "It is *true, None can forgive sins but God only*; but it is false that therefore Christ cannot, who had abundantly proved himself to have a _____ power."⁴
 - ii. Jesus was no mere man; he was *the Son of Man* (v 10) – a Messianic title that pointed to Christ as the _____ of man.
 - (c) The third miracle is the Savior **healing the paralyzed man**.
 - i. *Whether is it easier to say to the sick of the palsy, Thy sins be forgiven thee; or to say, Arise, and take up thy bed, and walk?* By asking this question, Jesus showed that he who has the power to heal has the authority to forgive. Spurgeon put it this way: "He that can pardon my soul can heal my body; for that would seem to be the _____ of the two deeds of mercy."⁵
 - ii. (v 11) *Arise, and take up thy bed, and go thy way into thine house*. The man came in, carried on his bed, but leaves carrying his bed! Jesus' power to heal is as his authority to forgive sin: completely, _____, and by his word.
6. (v 12) Christ's demonstration of *power on earth* amazed the multitude. "Christ's works were without precedent. When we see what he does in healing souls, we must own that we *never saw the like*."⁶

Answer Key: Key word(s): "clean" • 2. Peter's • 3. a) roof • 4. → answers may vary • 5. a) ii. restored; b) ii. representative; c) i. easier; immediately

³ J. C. Ryle, *Expository Thoughts on the Gospel, Volume Two* (Grand Rapids: Baker Books; 2007) 141.
⁴ Matthew Henry, *Matthew Henry's Commentary, VOL V, Matthew to John* (Iowa Falls: Riverside Book and Bible House, N.D.) 459.
⁵ Charles Spurgeon, *An Exposition of Matthew, the Gospel of the Kingdom* (Springfield: Particular Baptist Press, 2015) 56.
⁶ Henry, 460.