

JESUS HEALS

Mark 2:2-12, Luke 5:17-26; Matthew 8:5-13, Luke 7:2-9; John 9:1-41

Jesus was in the town of Capernaum. Pharisees and Teachers of the Law from all over Galilee had come to hear him. The building they were in was crammed full to overflowing.

Four men arrived bringing a paralysed friend they wanted Jesus to heal. But the crowd around the house was so big they had no chance of getting inside.

So they climbed up the stairs on the outside of the building to get onto the flat roof. (Such roofs were often made of beams covered with branches and a thick layer of mud plaster). The men then started clawing at the mud plaster and wood to make a hole in the roof.

Those below saw the hole appear and get bigger until it was large enough for the paralysed man to be lowered on his bed mat to Jesus.

When Jesus saw the men's faith he said to the paralysed man, 'Son, your sins are forgiven.'

Some of the Teachers of the Law listening were thinking, 'Who is this fellow who speaks blasphemy? Who can forgive sins but God alone?'

Jesus knew what they were thinking and turned to them. 'Which is easier', he asked, 'To say, "Your sins are forgiven," or to say, "Get up and walk?"'

Jesus continued, 'I want you to know that I have the power to forgive sin.' Then Jesus went to the paralysed man and said, 'Get up, pick up your mat and go home.'

Immediately the man stood up, picked up the mat he had been brought on and went home praising God.

Everyone was amazed and started praising God too. Overcome with awe they reported, 'We have seen remarkable things today.'

A Roman centurion, had a servant who had become paralysed, in terrible pain and close to dying.

The Centurion and his soldiers were garrisoned just outside Capernaum, the town where Jesus was staying as he taught around Galilee.

The Centurion went to some respected Jewish leaders in Capernaum and asked them to ask Jesus to come and heal his servant.

They found Jesus and begged, 'If anyone deserves your help, this Centurion does for he loves the Jewish people and even built a synagogue for us.'

Jesus went towards the Roman Centurion's house. Jews would not normally go into the house of a non-Jew. Just before Jesus came to the house the Centurion sent some friends with a message for Jesus.

'Lord, don't trouble yourself by coming to my home, for I am not worthy of such an honour or meeting you. Just say the word from where you are, and my servant will be healed. I am under the authority of my superior officers, and I have authority over my soldiers. I only need to say, "Go," and they go, or "Come," and they come. If I say to my servants, "Do this," they do it.'

When Jesus heard this, he was amazed.

Turning to the crowd that was following him, he said, 'I tell you, I haven't seen faith like this in all Israel!'

When the officer's friends returned to his house, they found the slave completely healed.

On another occasion, as Jesus was walking through Jerusalem, he saw a man who had been born blind. His disciples asked, 'Teacher, is this man blind because he did wrong or was it that his parents did wrong?' 'His blindness is not because of his sin or his parents,' Jesus replied.

'I am here to do what God wants,' Jesus continued. 'I am the light of the world.' Then Jesus spat on the ground, made some mud with the saliva, and put it on the man's eyes. 'Go,' Jesus told him, 'wash in the Pool of Siloam.' The man felt his way through the narrow streets to the pool.

When he washed the mud from his eyes – he could see for the first time in his life.

His neighbours and friends asked, 'Isn't this the man who used to sit and beg?' Doubters said, 'No, he only looks like him.' 'It's me!' the man exclaimed and explained what had happened. 'Where is the person who healed you?' they asked. The man did not know.

They took the man to some Pharisees who asked what had happened. 'He put mud on my eyes,' the man replied, 'I washed it off and now I can see!' When the Pharisees realised the miracle had taken place on the Sabbath some thought this miracle could not be from God; but others insisted it had to be.

They sent for the man's parents. 'Is this your son, the one you say was born blind? How is it that now he can see?' 'He is our son,' the parents answered, 'and we know he was born blind. But we don't know how he can now see. Why don't you ask him?'

The Pharisees summoned the man again. 'Tell the truth,' they ordered. 'We know the man who did this is a sinner.' 'I don't know whether he is a sinner,' he replied. 'But I do know I was blind but now I can see!' 'How did he open your eyes?' they demanded.

'I have already told you,' the man told them. 'Do you want to become His disciples too?' The Pharisees hurled insults at him. The man protested. 'If the man who did this was not from God, he could not have healed me.' 'How dare you lecture us,' the proud Pharisees retorted. 'You were full of sin from birth.' Then they threw him out.

When Jesus heard the man had been thrown out he went looking for him. 'Do you believe in the Son of Man?' Jesus asked. 'Who is he, sir?' the man asked. 'Tell me so that I may believe in him.' 'You can see him now,' Jesus replied. 'In fact, he is the one speaking with you.'

'Lord, I believe,' the man said and worshiped Jesus.

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