

# Jesus heals a paralysed man



Mark 2:1-12

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One day, in Capernaum, some men brought a lame man to the Lord Jesus. They believed that Jesus could heal this man. Jesus did heal him for their faith's sake. He first forgave the sick man's sins, for it is sin which separates from God. This made the Pharisees very angry; they considered his actions to be blasphemous because they did not recognize that Jesus was the Son of God. God is the only one who can forgive sins! Jesus asked these angry men: What is easier, to forgive sins or to heal a paralysed man? Afterwards he healed the sick man and so proved his power over body and soul.

The children learn that the Lord Jesus can heal the soul and the body.

Their trust in him is strengthened.

They perceive how important it is to have good friends.

In the morning sun the small houses of the city of Capernaum are reflected in the tranquil waters of the lake. The houses are mostly single-storey dwellings built closely together. By means of an outside staircase one can easily reach the flat roofs where people are sitting, enjoying the fresh crisp morning air. In the alleys below there is already much bustling activity. Fishermen are selling their night's catch in the market-place. They look happy and contented, they must have had a good catch. But not everyone is happy. In front of one of the houses a pale man has been bedded down on some mats. He looks very downcast. Not even the warming rays of the sun cause him to smile a little. He lies there every day, as he is unable to walk. Everyone simply calls him 'the lame one'. His pain often causes him to be dissatisfied and unfriendly and many of the villagers avoid him. His thoughts at the moment are bitter: "I wonder how they would act if they were unable to walk? If they had to be carried around and had to depend on alms from their neighbours? What reason do I have to be joyful? Why did God not give me healthy legs like all these people? He can't love me"

Four young men are now coming down the street, friends of the lame man. One of them places a hand on his shoulder and asks him kindly: "Is there anything you need?"

"Leave me alone," is the abrupt reply. The friend does not allow himself to be put off. He sits down on the ground next to the lame man and continues unperturbed: "Jesus returned to Capernaum by ship today. He is speaking to the people in a house at the far end of the village. He has already healed so many people. Don't you want to go to him too?"

"Go? How can I go? You know as well as I do that I cannot go there," complains the lame man. A second friend joins in and says: "The four of us will carry you to Jesus. We are your friends and Jesus will help you. You will see. He will heal you." "No one can help me. I will never be healed," is the lame man's dejected reply. But his friends have already lifted him up, mats and all, and are carrying him off. Their cheerful optimism is infectious and a little hope springs up in the heart of this poor, lame man.

They do not have to search for the house in which Jesus is speaking. People are even standing outside on the street, in front of the house, peering over each other's shoulders in an effort to try and catch a glimpse of Jesus or hear a little of what he is saying. They are not prepared to make room for the new arrival. What should the four young men do now? This unexpected hurdle only discourages them temporarily however. Determinedly they haul their lame friend onto the flat roof of

# Jesus Christ is our Saviour and Redeemer

the house. With some tools they make a hole in the roof. They then lower the lame man on his mats until he is lying on the floor at Jesus' feet. Surprised, Jesus looks up to the four pairs of hopeful eyes peering down at him through the opening in the roof. He immediately sees the faith these men have placed in him and their trust makes him happy. The Lord Jesus also perceives how sick the soul of the lame man has become. He therefore heals his soul first. He says to him: "Rejoice! God is with you. He loves you. Your sins are forgiven!"

Amongst those listening are also some Pharisees. They have studied the Scriptures and are proud of the fact that they lead pious lives. When these men hear that Jesus is forgiving sins, they are horrified. They have learnt that only God can forgive sins! Knowing their thoughts, Jesus asks them: "What is easier? To say to this man: 'Get up and be healed!' or 'Your sins are forgiven?'"

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Disconcerted, the Pharisees look at one another. What should they answer now? Before they can reply, however, the Lord Jesus continues: "I will prove to you that I have the authority to forgive sins. Tell you..." he says, turning to the lame man, "get up, pick up your mat, and go home." The lame man looks about him hesitantly. Can this possibly be true? He has been lame for years and has given up all hope of being healed. But the Lord Jesus is looking at him lovingly and encouragingly. He helps him by giving him new courage and godly strength. Then the miracle happens: The man gets up... stands by himself... he even picks up his mat and walks a few steps in the narrow confines of the room! His friends shout their joy out loud! The people are amazed. They say to one another: "We have never seen anything like it." The Pharisees look at each other in embarrassment.

The Lord Jesus showed them that he is no imposter, but the Saviour and Redeemer. He also has the power to forgive sins.



A man was paralysed. He was very sad.  
His friends brought him to the Lord Jesus. Jesus forgave the lame man his  
sins and so healed his soul.  
Then he also healed his sick body. The man became happy again.  
The Lord Jesus heals.

**1 Do the children understand how this lame man feels? (This man does not only have a sick body but, because he is bitter and without hope, his soul has become sick too.)**

**2 What do the children think is easier?**

One can see whether a sick person has been healed, but whether his sins have been forgiven one cannot ascertain. The Lord Jesus healed in the name of God and also forgave sins in God's name. He saw to it that both the body and the soul were healed. He forgives us our sins too and he can heal.

**3 How will this story continue? After the children have speculated about this, they describe the picture and discuss the conclusion of this incident.**

We should emphasize that the man was solely healed through the faith and help of his friends.

One can also pray for others. We also want to be such good friends.

As good friends we bring our fellow-men closer to the Lord Jesus.