

Pentwater Bible Church

Gospel of Mark

Message 13

June 22, 2014



He Heals the Lame by James Tissot Cir. 1886-1894

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Pentwater Bible Church

The Book of Mark
Message Thirteen
Jesus' Controversies with the religious Leaders
June 22, 2014
Daniel E. Woodhead



The Healing of the Lame of Capernaum Artist Unknown from Armenian Museum, Isfahan, Iran

JESUS DISTURBS THE SCRIBES

Mark 2:1-12

¹And again he entered into Capernaum, after some days; and it was noised that he was in the house. ²And straightway many were gathered together, insomuch that there was no room to receive them, no, not so much as about the door: and he preached the word unto them. ³And they come unto him, bringing one sick of the palsy, which was borne of four. ⁴And when they could not come nigh unto him for the press, they uncovered the roof where he was: and when they had broken it up, they let down the bed wherein the sick of the palsy lay. ⁵When Jesus saw their faith, he said unto the sick of the palsy, Son, thy sins be forgiven thee. ⁶But there were certain of the scribes sitting there, and reasoning in their hearts, ⁷Why doth this man thus speak blasphemies? who can forgive sins but God only? ⁸And immediately when Jesus perceived in his spirit that they so reasoned within themselves, he said unto them, Why reason ye these things in your hearts? ⁹Whether 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? ¹⁰But that ye may know that the Son of man hath

power on earth to forgive sins, (he saith to the sick of the palsy,) ¹¹ I say unto thee, Arise, and take up thy bed, and go thy way into thine house. ¹² And immediately he arose, took up the bed, and went forth before them all; insomuch that they were all amazed, and glorified God, saying, We never saw it on this fashion (KJV).

JESUS RETURNS TO CAPERNAUM

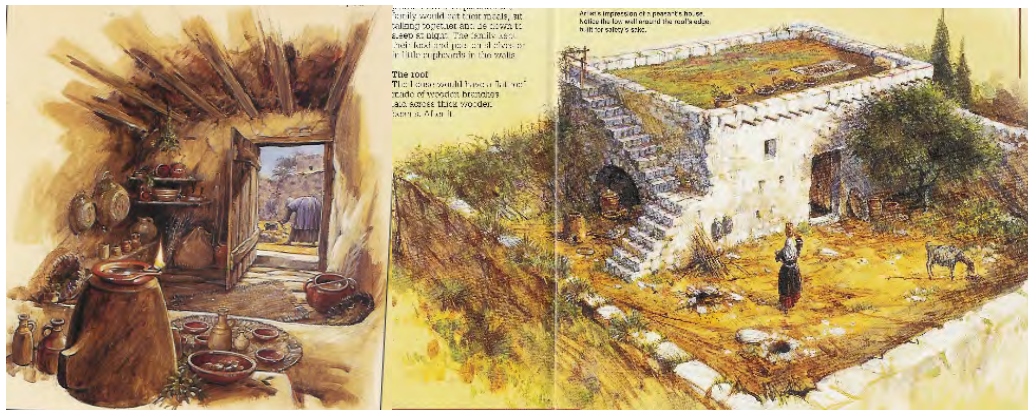
Mark 2:1-12

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After ministering in different cities in Galilee (Mark 1:39) Jesus and His inner circle returned to the home base. As He returned to Capernaum the word of His return spread quickly throughout the city. The crowd was waiting for Him as they had done earlier (Mark 1:37). However, this time they packed Peter's mother in law's home. This time though He did not heal. He preached the Word to them. His message was consistent throughout His ministry. The Messiah had come to break the power that sin held on the people as well as to offer them the Messianic Age. His miracles were only done to affirm His identity and reveal His compassion on the people He had come to serve.

THE CROWD IS DETERMINED TO GET HIM TO HEAL

Jewish first century homes were made of stone and clay. The roofs were typically accessed by outside stone staircases. They were flat and supported by beams resting on the exterior walls of the house (see diagram). The space between the beams were filled in by smaller poles and sticks and then covered with thatch. Finally the thatch was covered with a surface of mud, which hardened into clay. Because the roof was flat it needed to be resurfaced occasionally by means of a roof roller. The roof functioned as a deck of sorts. The Lexham Bible Dictionary describes the typical first century Jewish home.



Artwork from www.cathydeaton.com

The typical Israelite home was rectangular, with one or two stories and between two and four rooms. Israelites used indigenous materials such as stone, wood, reeds, and mud brick to build their homes for simple functionality in an agrarian society. Regional variations in home design existed mainly because of variations in available materials. Stone pillars divided the lower level into parallel rooms. Some pillars were made of solid limestone, while others were made of stone and mud brick, or a stone base with wood extending to the ceiling height. The roof was made by overlaying the walls with palm fronds or boards, which were then coated with plaster. A limestone cylinder could then be used to compact the plaster periodically to help it maintain its structural integrity. In the same manner as the outer walls, the roof had to be resealed with plaster after the rainy season each year. During the hot summer months, the roof was used as a sleeping area. The roof could also be used for storage or domestic labor, as in the story of Rehab, who hides the Israelite spies under stalks of flax (Joshua 2:6). Ancients also used the roof as a sleeping area during the warmer months (1 Samuel 9:25–26). Other activities taking place in this living space include bathing (2 Samuel 11:2) and worship (Jeremiah 19:13). Deuteronomy required a parapet be built around the roof's perimeter to prevent falls (Deuteronomy 22:8).¹

Mark 2:3-4

³ And they come unto him, bringing one sick of the palsy, which was borne of four. ⁴ And when they could not come nigh unto him for the press, they uncovered the roof where he was: and when they had broken it up, they let down the bed wherein the sick of the palsy lay (KJV).

As Jesus was preaching four men came who were carrying man who was paralyzed on a mat of sorts. Since there were so many people in the house as well as crowded around trying to get in to see Jesus the men went up to the roof. From there they began to dig through the sod and clay to get into see Jesus. They were convinced that He could heal this man of his paralysis. From here they attached ropes (likely fishing ropes) to the pallet upon which they had laid him and carefully lowered the makeshift bed into the main room of the home where Jesus was teaching.

JESUS FORGIVES SINS

Mark 2:

⁵ When Jesus saw their faith, he said unto the sick of the palsy, Son, thy sins be forgiven thee (KJV).

¹ Knuth, S. (2012) House, Ancient near Eastern. In (J. D. Barry & L. Wentz, Eds.) *The Lexham Bible Dictionary*. Bellingham, WA: Lexham Press.

They brought this man to Jesus to be healed. Even with all the noise of the crowd it must have been apparent to those including Jesus that people were digging through the roof to get to Him. Jesus was compassionate toward them and particularly the invalid. He used a very affectionate term (son) to address the crippled man and very unexpectedly told the paralytic that his sins were forgiven while marveling at their faith. Jesus immediately went to the root cause of every issue for every person on this earth. We need a savior. All people on this earth need spiritual healing since the Fall in the Garden of Eden. Disease and death are the consequences of man's sinful condition. Throughout the Old Testament healing can be seen as dependent upon God's forgiveness (2 Chronicles 7:14; Psalm 41:4; 103:3; 147:3; Isaiah 19:22; 38:16–17; Jeremiah 3:22; Hosea 14:4). By extending forgiveness to the man Jesus showed that this man's physical condition had a basic spiritual cause. As God is the source of the forgiveness of sins Jesus was affirming His deity in this particular statement and healing. Then Jesus proceeded to heal the man.

THE SCRIBES BEGIN TO CHALLENGE JESUS

Mark 2:6-7

⁶ But there were certain of the scribes sitting there, and reasoning in their hearts, ⁷ Why doth this man thus speak blasphemies? who can forgive sins but God only (KJV)?

The Scribes also known as the teachers of the Law were the legal specialists at the time of Jesus (Luke 5:17). They realized the popularity of Jesus' teaching and came to investigate Him and were immediately offended by what they heard. They came from Jerusalem to Capernaum primarily to see if His teaching met with their standards. Instead of recognizing Him as their long awaited Messiah they were disturbed at what they heard. They were contemptuous of Him and His popularity as well as His perfect teaching of the Law. Forgiveness of sins was a sign that the messianic age had come (Isaiah 40:2; Joel 2:32; Micah 7:15-19; Zechariah 13:1). They knew that only God could forgive sins (Exodus 34:6–9; Psalm 103:3; 130:4; Isaiah 43:25; 44:22; 48:11; Daniel 9:9) and regarded anybody making such claims as blasphemous (Leviticus 24:16). Without recognizing who He was they simply thought that this was the most serious offense demanding capital punishment. The Mosaic Law demanded stoning in such instances (Leviticus 24:15-16). Jesus was working His way with these men toward the cross. God had obviously not revealed to them who Jesus was as he did to Peter (Matthew 16:17; Luke 10:21). This was part of God's plan to have them work together with the priests and other Temple officials in despising Jesus to the point where they would plead for His crucifixion.

John 19:15

But they cried out, Away with him, away with him, crucify him. Pilate saith unto them, Shall I crucify your King? The chief priests answered, We have no king but Caesar (KJV).

JESUS READS THEIR MINDS

Mark 2:8-12

⁸ *And immediately when Jesus perceived in his spirit that they so reasoned within themselves, he said unto them, Why reason ye these things in your hearts? 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? ¹⁰ But that ye may know that the Son of man hath power on earth to forgive sins, (he saith to the sick of the palsy,) ¹¹ I say unto thee, Arise, and take up thy bed, and go thy way into thine house. ¹² And immediately he arose, took up the bed, and went forth before them all; insomuch that they were all amazed, and glorified God, saying, We never saw it on this fashion (KJV).*

Jesus knew in His spirit what they were saying and the hostility and anger with which they directed at Him over this issue. He simply asked them *Why reason ye these things in your hearts?* He was essentially asking them why they thought His forgiveness of the paralytic's sins was blasphemous. He then challenges them with a difficult question. He asked them, *"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?"* Following this He directed His speech away from the Scribes and spoke to the paralytic man and the general audience as well. He said, *"But that ye may know that the Son of man hath power on earth to forgive sins, (he saith to the sick of the palsy,) I say unto thee, Arise, and take up thy bed, and go thy way into thine house."* The paralytic to *"Arise, and take up thy bed, and go thy way into thine house. And immediately he arose, took up the bed, and went forth before them all."* He was now physically healed as evidenced by his ability to rise up, pick up his bed and walk in front of the crowd and the Scribes as well.

Only God can forgive sins so that is the more unique healing. The Son of Man has the authority to heal sins and He must therefore be God. People cannot see sins as God forgives them but they can see a physical healing which is one of the reasons why Jesus healed this man. He wanted all to see that the physical healing was a manifestation of a more significant issue the spiritual condition of mankind and He could do something about it. This man and the friends who broke through the roof to lower him into Jesus' presence exhibited strong faith that Jesus could heal him. It was this faith in the Son of Man that allowed the spiritual and physical healing to be accomplished in this paralyzed man. While the Scribes debated and considered their Law and Jesus actions the people recognized God's power and that Jesus had this authority.

NEXT WEEK: MARK: JESUS' CONTROVERSIES BECAUSE HE CALLED LEVI TO BE AN APOSTLE

Please call or e-mail with any questions or comments

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