

Study of Mark – Lesson 04

Mark 2:1-17 “Healing a Paralytic; Calling Levi”

Jesus Forgives and Heals a Paralyzed Man

2¹ A few days later, / when Jesus again entered Capernaum, / the people heard / that he had come home. / ²They gathered in such large numbers / that there was no room left, / not even outside the door, / and he preached the word to them. / ³Some men came, / bringing to him a paralyzed man, / carried by four of them. / ⁴Since they could not get him to Jesus / because of the crowd, / they made an opening in the roof / above Jesus / by digging through it / and then lowered the mat / the man was lying on. / ⁵When Jesus saw their faith, / he said to the paralyzed man, / “Son, / your sins are forgiven.”



⁶Now some teachers of the law / were sitting there, / thinking to themselves, / ⁷“Why does this fellow talk like that? / He’s blaspheming! / Who can forgive sins but God alone?”

⁸Immediately Jesus knew in his spirit / that this was what they were thinking in their hearts, / and he said to them, / “Why are you thinking

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these things? / ⁹ Which is easier: / to say to this paralyzed man, / ‘Your sins are forgiven,’ / or to say, / ‘Get up, / take your mat and walk’? / ¹⁰ But I want you to know / that the Son of Man has authority on earth to forgive sins.” / So he said to the man, / ¹¹ “I tell you, / get up, / take your mat / and go home.” / ¹² He got up, / took his mat / and walked out in full view of them all. / This amazed everyone / and they praised God, / saying, / “We have never seen anything like this!”

¹³ Once again / Jesus went out beside the lake. / A large crowd came to him, / and he began to teach them. / ¹⁴ As he walked along, / he saw Levi / son of Alphaeus / sitting at the tax collector’s booth. / “Follow me,” / Jesus told him, / and Levi got up / and followed him.

¹⁵ While Jesus was having dinner at Levi’s house, / many tax collectors and sinners / were eating with him / and his disciples, / for there were many who followed him. / ¹⁶ When the teachers of the law / who were Pharisees / saw him eating with the sinners and tax collectors, / they asked his disciples: / “Why does he eat with tax collectors and sinners?”

¹⁷ On hearing this, / Jesus said to them, / “It is not the healthy / who need a doctor, / but the sick. / I have not come to call the righteous, / but sinners.”

Vocabulary

1. **Paralyzed:** unable to make voluntary movement. Handicapped.
2. **Roof:** top covering of the house
3. **To dig:** move something; to search carefully
4. **Blasphemy:** Disrespect for God or religion; irreverence

Questions

1. Why would so many people come to Jesus?
2. What relationship would you have to have with someone to be so very determined to get him to a healer?
3. Levi is a Jewish name; Matthew is Greek. Why would Jesus want him as a disciple?

Notes

1. The home of a Man during the time of Jesus was fairly simple. When the people awakened, they opened their doors, and others were welcome. The roofs were flat, and often had a staircase that led to them. On hot nights they would often sleep on the roof. Between the timbers of the roof, a grass or thatch or mud coating made it safe to walk and be on the roof. The four friends in this story removed the filling between the beams and lowered their friend down. The repair could have been relatively simple.

2. In the minds of the Jews, sin and suffering were connected. If a man was ill, he must have sinned. The Pharisees believed that only God could forgive sin. Jesus' confrontation with the Pharisees may have begun the road to the death of Jesus.
3. Jesus had four disciples: Simon Peter, Andrew, James and John. Levi or Matthew is the fifth. Tax collectors were hated and were considered dishonest. Levi worked for King Herod Antipas, the son of Herod the Great. Tax collectors were told how much money they had to collect for Herod, and the rest they collected or extorted made them very rich men. The citizen had no way of knowing how much he owed in taxes; he simply had to pay whatever amount the taxpayer told him to pay.
4. Levi gave up everything to follow Jesus. The fishermen could always go back to fishing, but there was no way back for Levi (Matthew). He is said to be the author of the Gospel of Matthew.
5. Again, there is a confrontation with the Pharisees because Jesus ate with disreputable people. Jesus did not follow all the rules of the religious Jews. The sins of the people varied from not washing hands in a ritual way to thievery.
6. Pharisees: Obeyed the oral laws and religious rules. Scribes and Pharisees followed Jesus and tried to catch him breaking the laws. The penalty for blasphemy is found in Leviticus 24:16.