

*The Gospel According to*

SAINT MATTHEW

SAINT MARK

SAINT LUKE

SAINT JOHN

CHAPTER 9, VERSES 2-8

**9:2** - And, behold, they<sup>1</sup> brought to him a man<sup>2</sup> sick of the palsy<sup>3</sup>, lying on a bed<sup>4</sup>; and Jesus seeing their faith<sup>5</sup> said unto the sick of the palsy<sup>3</sup>; Son<sup>6</sup>, be of good cheer<sup>7</sup>; thy sins<sup>8</sup> be forgiven thee<sup>9</sup>.  
**9:3** - And, behold, certain<sup>10</sup> of the scribes<sup>11</sup> said within themselves<sup>12</sup>, This man blasphemeth<sup>13</sup>.  
**9:4** - And Jesus knowing their thoughts<sup>14</sup> said, Wherefore<sup>15</sup> think ye<sup>16</sup> evil<sup>17</sup> in your hearts<sup>18</sup>?  
**9:5** - For whether<sup>19</sup> is easier<sup>20</sup>, to say, Thy sins<sup>8</sup> be forgiven thee<sup>9</sup>; or to say, Arise<sup>21</sup>, and walk<sup>22</sup>?  
**9:6** - But that ye may know<sup>23</sup> that the Son of man<sup>24</sup> hath power<sup>25</sup> on earth<sup>26</sup> to forgive sins<sup>27</sup>, (then saith he to the sick of the palsy<sup>3</sup>.) Arise<sup>21</sup>, take up<sup>28</sup> thy bed, and go unto thine house<sup>29</sup>.  
**9:7** - And he arose<sup>30</sup>, and departed<sup>31</sup> to his house<sup>29</sup>.  
**9:8** - But when the multitudes<sup>32</sup> saw it<sup>33</sup>, they marvelled<sup>34</sup>, and glorified God<sup>35</sup>, which had given such power<sup>25</sup> unto men<sup>36</sup>.

CHAPTER 2, VERSES 1-12

**2:1** - And again<sup>37</sup> he entered into Capernaum<sup>38</sup> after some days<sup>39</sup>; and it was noised<sup>40</sup> that he was in the house<sup>29</sup>.  
**2:2** - And straightway<sup>41</sup> many<sup>42</sup> were gathered together<sup>43</sup>, insomuch that there was no room<sup>44</sup> to receive them<sup>45</sup>, no, not so much<sup>46</sup> as about the door<sup>47</sup>; and he preached<sup>48</sup> the word<sup>49</sup> unto them.  
**2:3** - And they<sup>1</sup> come unto him, bringing<sup>50</sup> one sick of the palsy<sup>3</sup>, which was borne<sup>51</sup> of four<sup>52</sup>.  
**2:4** - And when they could not come nigh<sup>53</sup> unto him<sup>54</sup> for the press<sup>55</sup>, they<sup>1</sup> uncovered<sup>56</sup> the roof<sup>57</sup> where he was: and when they had broken it up<sup>58</sup>, they let down<sup>59</sup> the bed<sup>28</sup> wherein the sick of the palsy<sup>3</sup> lay<sup>60</sup>.  
**2:5** - When Jesus saw their faith<sup>5</sup>, he said unto the sick of the palsy<sup>3</sup>, Son<sup>6</sup>, thy sins<sup>8</sup> be forgiven thee<sup>9</sup>.  
**2:6** - But there were certain<sup>10</sup> of the scribes<sup>11</sup> sitting<sup>61</sup> there, and reasoning<sup>62</sup> in their hearts<sup>18</sup>,  
**2:7** - Why doth this man thus speak blasphemies<sup>13</sup>? who can forgive sins<sup>1</sup> but God only<sup>63</sup>?  
**2:8** - And immediately<sup>64</sup> when Jesus perceived<sup>65</sup> in his spirit<sup>66</sup> that they so reasoned<sup>67</sup> within themselves<sup>12</sup>, he said unto them, Why reason<sup>68</sup> ye these things<sup>69</sup> in your hearts<sup>18</sup>?  
**2:9** - Whether<sup>19</sup> is it easier<sup>20</sup> to say to the sick of the palsy<sup>3</sup>, Thy sins<sup>8</sup> be forgiven thee<sup>9</sup>; or to say, Arise<sup>21</sup>, and take up thy bed<sup>70</sup>, and walk<sup>22</sup>?  
**2:10** - But that ye may know<sup>23</sup> that the Son of man<sup>24</sup> hath power<sup>25</sup> on earth<sup>26</sup> to forgive sins<sup>27</sup>, (he saith to the sick of the palsy<sup>3</sup>.)  
**2:11** - I say unto thee, Arise<sup>21</sup>, and take up thy bed<sup>28</sup>, and go thy way<sup>71</sup> into thine house<sup>29</sup>.  
**2:12** - And immediately<sup>64</sup> he arose<sup>30</sup>, took up the bed<sup>28</sup>, and went forth<sup>72</sup> before them all; insomuch that they were all amazed<sup>73</sup>, and glorified God<sup>35</sup>, saying, We never saw<sup>74</sup> it on this fashion<sup>75</sup>.

CHAPTER 5, VERSES 17-26

**5:17** - And it came to pass<sup>76</sup> on a certain<sup>10</sup> day, as he was teaching<sup>77</sup>, that there were Pharisees<sup>78</sup> and doctors of the law<sup>79</sup> sitting<sup>61</sup> by, which were come out of every town<sup>80</sup> of Galilee<sup>81</sup>, and Judæa<sup>82</sup>, and Jerusalem<sup>83</sup>; and the power<sup>25</sup> of the Lord<sup>84</sup> was present<sup>85</sup> to heal them<sup>86</sup>.  
**5:18** - And, behold, men brought in a bed<sup>4</sup> a man which was taken with a palsy<sup>87</sup>: and they sought means<sup>88</sup> to bring him in<sup>89</sup>, and to lay him before him<sup>90</sup>.  
**5:19** - And when they could not<sup>91</sup> find by what way<sup>92</sup> they might bring him in because of the multitude<sup>93</sup>, they went upon the housetop<sup>94</sup>, and let him down<sup>95</sup> through the tiling<sup>96</sup> with his couch<sup>97</sup> into the midst<sup>98</sup> before Jesus.  
**5:20** - And when he saw their faith<sup>5</sup>, he said unto him, Man<sup>99</sup>, thy sins<sup>8</sup> are forgiven thee<sup>9</sup>.  
**5:21** - And the scribes<sup>11</sup> and the Pharisees<sup>78</sup> began to reason<sup>68</sup>, saying, Who is this which speaketh blasphemies<sup>13</sup>? Who can forgive sins<sup>27</sup>, but God alone<sup>100</sup>?  
**5:22** - But when Jesus perceived<sup>65</sup> their thoughts<sup>14</sup>, he answering said unto them, What reason<sup>68</sup> ye in your hearts<sup>18</sup>?  
**5:23** - Whether<sup>19</sup> is easier<sup>20</sup>, to say, Thy sins<sup>8</sup> be forgiven thee<sup>9</sup>; or to say, Rise<sup>101</sup> up and walk<sup>70</sup>?  
**5:24** - But that ye may know<sup>23</sup> that the Son of man<sup>24</sup> hath power<sup>25</sup> upon earth<sup>26</sup> to forgive sins<sup>27</sup>, (he said unto the sick of the palsy<sup>3</sup>.) I say unto thee, Arise<sup>21</sup>, and take up thy couch<sup>97</sup>, and go into thine house<sup>29</sup>.  
**5:25** - And immediately<sup>64</sup> he rose up<sup>102</sup> before them, and took up that whereon<sup>103</sup> he lay<sup>60</sup>, and departed<sup>31</sup> to his own house<sup>29</sup>, glorifying God<sup>35</sup>.  
**5:26** - And they were all amazed<sup>73</sup>, and they glorified God<sup>35</sup>, and were filled with fear<sup>104</sup>, saying, We have seen strange things<sup>105</sup> to day.

NOTHING RECORDED

**CHRONOLOGY:** Spring of 28CE (After the blooming of the lilies of the field, which took place between March and April on the modern Calendar and prior to the Feast of the Passover on 27 March 28CE).

**LOCATION:** A house in Capernaum, most probably the home of Peter the son of Jonah.

**COMMENTARY:** Jesus has concluded the Sermon on the Mount. He has healed a Leper as He departed from the Mount of Beatitudes. Shortly thereafter, and we do not know how many days that passed, Jesus found Himself in a private home. We are not told who the home belonged to, but the most probable theory is that He was in the home of Peter. He was teaching, as was His custom. We are not given the words He spoke, but we can be sure that He was teaching the doctrines of salvation. Jesus' fame had spread. He was nearing the end of the first year of His ministry. Much had been done. When the population heard He was in Capernaum, they came to hear Him, probably with hopes of seeing miracles and mighty works. The Jewish leaders from the Great Sanhedrin and local Sanhedrins came to evaluate His teachings and assess potential threats that Jesus might pose to them. Jesus found that the house He was in became occupied to its limit. The house was overflowing. The crowd poured out into the streets. A side story develops at this point. Four

friends of a paralytic man believed that Jesus could cure their friend. They retrieved him on something resembling a stretcher. They planned to deliver their friend to Jesus so that He could be healed. Their plan was stified when they arrived at the house Jesus was teaching in and the crowd blocked the way. The crowd was so thick that it was impossible for them to get their friend to the Savior. They were determined and inventive. Their faith was so strong that they refused to give up. They used external stairs, customary to the homes of the time, to carry their friend to the roof of the house. They dug a hole through the clay roof, lifted out the thatch, and lowered their friend to Jesus. Jesus was not alarmed by their actions, but acknowledges their faith. He directly forgives the man of his sins. The unbelievers immediately question Jesus' ability to forgive sins. Obviously there was no outward evidence that the sins had been forgiven. The Jews had a belief that all illness was a consequence of sin. Jesus declares that so they would know that He had the power to forgive sin, He would heal the man's paralysis. He commanded him to arise and walk to his own home. He did. The believers marveled, while the unbelievers feared what they saw.

## FOOTNOTES:

- 1- **they brought** – The phrase “they brought” is translated from the Greek word “προσφέρω” or “prospheō”. It means to bring to, lead to, or to be borne towards one.

The news that Jesus was back in Capernaum spread fast. The general public quickly became aware that Jesus was in a specific house. This included four friends of a paralytic man. **“They must have heard it from others; they must have witnessed it themselves in other instances.”** (The Life and Times of Jesus the Messiah, Volume 1, Alfred Edersheim, page 503). One might imagine a group of friends discussing the needs of their paralytic friend. At least one of them must have proposed that Jesus had the power to heal their friend. Knowing that the paralyzed man could not get himself to the Savior for healing, the friends got him and physically brought him, even carried him, to Jesus.

- 2- **a man** – The word “man” is implied. The Codex Sinaiticus translates the phrase “a man sick of the palsy, lying on a bed” as “a palsied man lying on a bed”. (Codex Sinaiticus: The H.T. Anderson New Testament, Translated by Henry Tompkins Anderson, Matthew, Chapter 9, Verse 2, page 23).

On the surface, we know little of the paralytic man, other than he was paralyzed. As we look closer, several things come to light regarding this man. We learn that he was a baptized member of the church. This comes to light as Jesus forgives him of his sins. Doctrinally, we know that the forgiveness of sin comes only after the covenant of baptism has been entered into. Consequently, when Jesus forgave the man's sins it would indicate that the covenant was in effect. Elder McConkie taught, **“The overwhelming probability is that the paralytic here restored to health and vigor was a member of the Church who had already been baptized for the remission of sins. It is not logical to suppose that a man who believed in Jesus as the Christ, who had grown in faith to the point that he had power to rise from his bed of palsy at the Master's word, who had lived in Capernaum where for months Jesus and his disciples had been baptizing converts, it is not reasonable to believe that such a person would have remained outside the sheepfold of the Good Shepherd.”** (The Doctrinal New Testament Commentary - The Gospels, Volume 1, Bruce R. McConkie, page 178).

The man also had faith to be healed. He must have, as a criteria for healing, believed that Jesus was the Christ. He knew that Jesus was and is mighty to save.

The man was also a sinner. We don't know what his sins were, but he, like you and I, had faltered in his mortal probation. The nature of his sins are not important to this story. The fact is, we have all sinned and have no ability, on our own, to save ourselves from our errors.

The man had friends, good friends, who came to the rescue when they saw the opportunity to bring their friend unto Jesus.

- 3- **sick with the palsy** – The phrase “a man sick with the palsy” is translated from the Greek word “παραλυτικός” or “paralytikos”. It means paralytic. It refers to one suffering from the relaxing of the nerves of one's side. It can be used of someone who is disabled or weak of limb. The Greek word is also used for a stroke. Elder McConkie classifies the word as **“A form of paralysis.”** (The Doctrinal New Testament Commentary - The Gospels, Volume 1, Bruce R. McConkie, page 178).

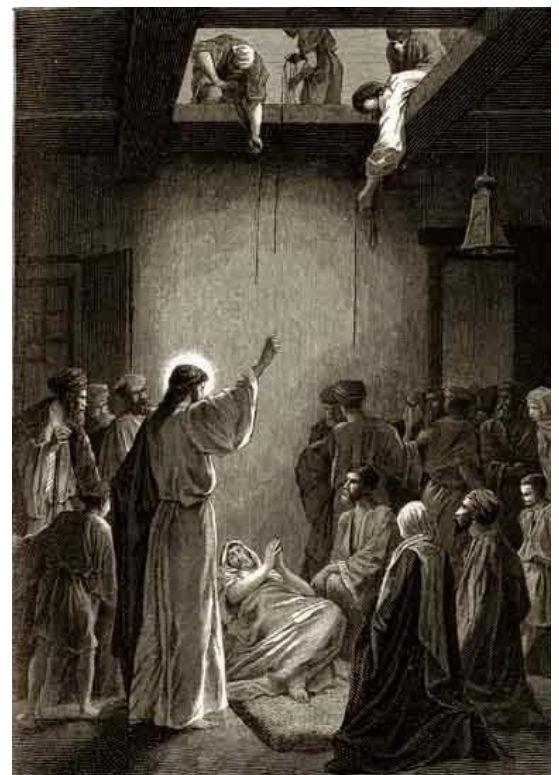
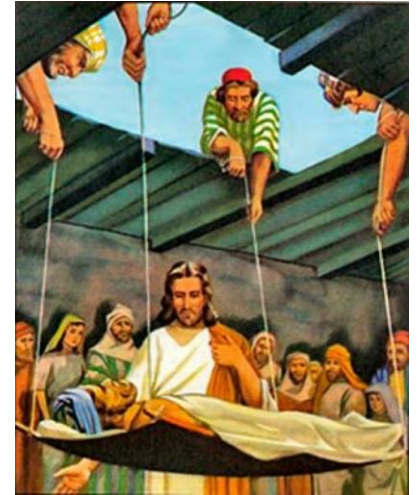
Farrar paints a picture of a paralyzed man who had totally lost mobility. **“But there was one poor sufferer – a man bedridden from a stroke of paralysis.”** (The Story of a Beautiful Life: Farrar's Life of Christ, The New 20th Century Edition, 1900, Canon Farrar, D.D., F.R.S., page 221). The man's condition was debilitating. His ability to advance in life was significantly stifled by his condition. Without intervention, his life would have been difficult and bleak.

Consequently, **“the palsy, or paralysis, is often seen as a representation of the effects of sin upon the soul and life of each of us.”** (Miracles of the New Testament: A Guide to the Symbolic Messages, Alonzo L. Gaskill, page 73). Sin paralyzes our spiritual abilities. As we sin, we lose the ability to feel the spirit of the Lord and progress spiritually. Like paralysis, sin causes us to become spiritually numb.

The paralyzed man was in such a state that without outside influence, he would have remained in his debilitating state. Often our sins leave us in a similar state. Our sins hinder us from coming to the healer. **“Do we know anyone in our life who is afflicted with spiritual palsy, someone who just cannot come back to the Church by himself or herself? He or she could be one of our children, one of our parents, a spouse, or a friend.”** (General Conference, “Rescue in Unity”, Elder Chi Hong (Sam) Wong, October 2014). They are in need of friends who can bear them back to the fold. We are those friends, and this is the role of a true friend.

- 4- **bed** – The word “bed” is translated from the Greek word “κλίνη” or “klinē”. It means a small bed, a couch, or a low lying couch used to recline upon at meals. It can also be used to refer to a stretcher or bier.

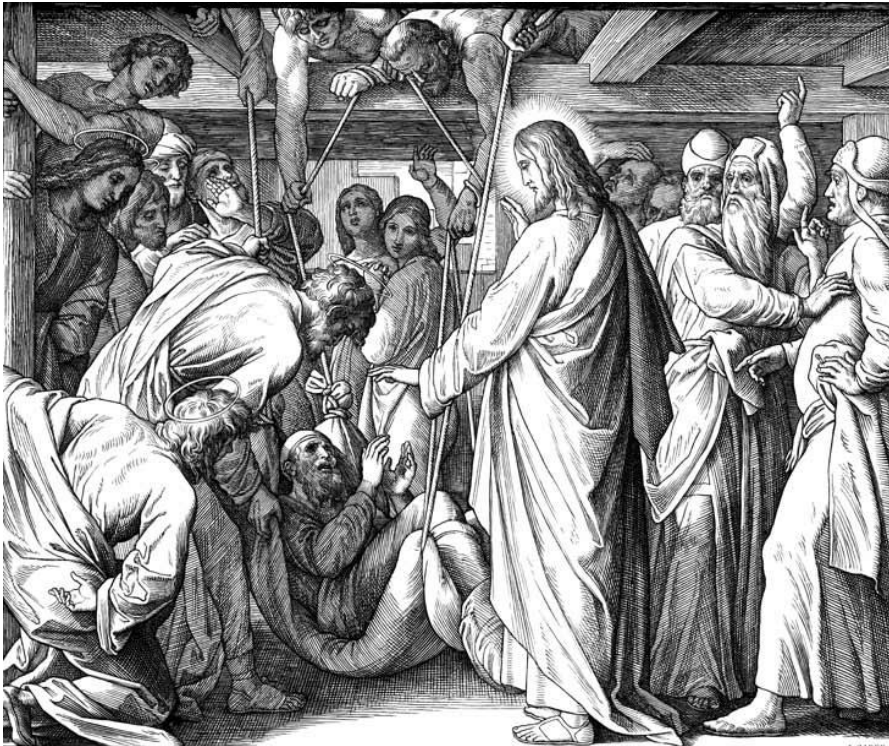
Most paintings and depictions of the palsied man in a bed show him on a stretcher or wooden framed cot. Though the Greeks and Romans were more prone to such beds, the Israelites at the time of Jesus did not commonly use such beds. **“In the East, as now, the very poor as a rule slept on the ground, their outer garments serving as both mattress and blanket. The law, therefore, forbade such a garment to be kept in pledge after sunset, lest the man should be without covering. In more advanced conditions a rug or a mat was used as a bed. At first it laid on the floor, usually near a wall; later it**





was put on an elevation, either a raised part of the floor or a bedstead.” (Zondervan Pictorial Bible Dictionary, General Editor Merrill C. Tenney, Pages 101-102). The man with palsy was most probably poor. Such was the most common state of the sick and disabled. The poor slept on mats or mattresses that closely resembled a bed roll. It is unlikely that the palsied man’s bed had a wooden frame.

- 5- **faith** – The word “faith” is translated from the Greek word “πίστις” or “pistis”. It means a conviction of the truth of anything. **“Pistis may carry more of the nuance of personal commitment to Jesus, an attitude that can grow or diminish, involving the nuance of Christian discipleship.”** (The Gospel according to Luke I-IX: A New translation with Introduction and Commentary, The Anchor Yale Bible, Joseph A. Fitzmyer, page 583).



We know that the primary ingredient required to enjoy the powers of heaven is faith. The Book of Mormon teaches, **“For if there be no faith among the children of men God can do no miracle among them; wherefore, he showed not himself until after their faith.”** (Ether 12:12). Surely the fact that men were digging through the roof of a house that was not theirs would have been cause for alarm. Bystanders might have been angered, offended, or appalled. As typical for Jesus, He saw things in a totally different light. He saw faith. More so, He saw it as an act of faith. **“Curiously, Jesus indicates that it was the faith of the paralyzed boy’s friends that caught His attention and provoked His blessing upon the quadriplegic. This is not to imply that the ailing child had no faith, only that Jesus was impressed by the greatness of the conviction of his friends.”** (Miracles of the New Testament: A Guide to the Symbolic Messages, Alonzo L. Gaskill, page 73).

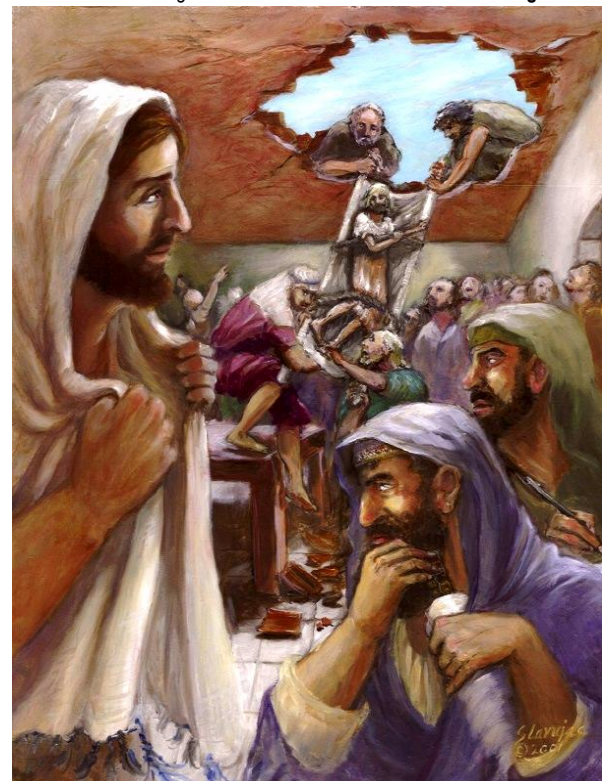
Faith is more than a belief. It is belief put into action. It is demonstrated by faithful works and behaviors. The friends of the paralytic man had faith in Jesus, and therefore they acted. Their faith surely contributed to the healing of the man, but the miracle that was to ensue required the faith of the man himself. Elder McConkie wrote, **“Here also is a man, lying on a litter, who is qualified and entitled, by faith, to have his sins remitted. No verbal request, either for healing or for forgiveness, has been made to the Master; yet the desire of the incapacitated one is apparent.”** (The Mortal Messiah: Volume 2, Collector’s Edition, Bruce R. McConkie, page 31). He had the faith to be healed.

It stands to reason that the paralytic man needed faith in Jesus to be healed by Him. But, what of the faith of his friends. Does such faith have a role in healing? The answer is unequivocally ‘YES’. Our faith and prayers are heard by God. Our righteous faith is always acknowledged by heaven. The influence of the righteous will always benefit those who are suffering or struggle with trials. Elder Wong taught, **“May I share with you one more hidden treasure found in this scripture account. It is in verse 5: ‘When Jesus saw their faith’ (emphasis added). I had not noticed this in the past—their faith. Our combined faith will also affect the well-being of others.”** (General Conference, “Rescue in Unity”, Elder Chi Hong (Sam) Wong, October 2014). Our faith, turned to action, will help those in need. It also strengthens the faith of those in need. **“It also gives the supplicants the chance to display an extraordinary initiative, which our passage terms ‘faith’, in order to overcome the obstacle.”** (Mark 1-8: A New translation with Introduction and Commentary, The Anchor Yale Bible, Joel Marcus, page 220).

- 6- **Son** – The word “Son” is translated from the Greek word “τέκνον” or “teknon”. It means offspring or children, specifically a male child or a son. Some would translate the word as “Child”.

Many scholar use this Greek word as an indication of the paralytic man’s age. The assumption is that he was a young man or even a child. It should be kept in mind that the Jews did not consider a male to be an adult man until age thirty. That being said, this would only indicate that he was under thirty years of age. Gaskill wrote, **“The paralyzed man is called ‘son’ by Jesus. The Greek speaks of him as a ‘child’ rather than a ‘son’ – thus he may have been comparatively young. Jesus’s choice to address the youth, who was a sinner, as ‘child’ or ‘son’ suggests a manifest warmth by the Lord toward this creation of God who enjoyed a rather pitiful existence, physically and spiritually.”** (Miracles of the New Testament: A Guide to the Symbolic Messages, Alonzo L. Gaskill, page 73).

Another theory, is based on the doctrine of adoption. When we enter into the waters of baptism, and covenant with God, we are reborn as a child of Jesus Christ. He is the Father of the covenant. We are thereby adopted into the House of Israel. When Jesus referred to the paralytic man as a son or child, He was revealing the divine relationship between the covenant people and Himself. Jesus will never forget His covenant children. **“As Saint Jerome (circa AD 347-420) noted, ‘O Wonderful humility! He addresses as ‘son’ this adjunct and infirm paralytic with disjointed members whom the priests did not stoop to touch’.”** (Miracles of the New Testament: A Guide to the Symbolic Messages, Alonzo L. Gaskill, page 73). Yet Jesus came to the rescue. He did far more than touch. He did heal him. **“He spoke forgiveness to his soul, and that not as something to come, but as an act already past: ‘Child, thy sins have been forgiven.’** (The Life and Times of Jesus the Messiah, Volume 1, Alfred Edersheim, page 504). This is the good news of Jesus. He can forgive all sins and heal all infirmities.



- 7- **be of good cheer** – The phrase “be of good cheer” is translated from the Greek word “θαρσέω” or “tharseō”. It means to be of good courage or be of good cheer. The Codex Sinaiticus translated



the phrase “good cheer” as “Take courage”. (Codex Sinaiticus: The H.T. Anderson New Testament, Translated by Henry Tompkins Anderson, Matthew, Chapter 2, Verse 2, page 23).

The term “good cheer” is commonly associated with Jesus. In the Doctrine and Covenants, the Lord says, **“Wherefore, be of good cheer, and do not fear, for I the Lord am with you, and will stand by you; and ye shall bear record of me, even Jesus Christ, that I am the Son of the living God, that I was, that I am, and that I am to come.”** (Doctrine & Covenants 68:6). Regardless of the trials of life, we are never alone. We are promised that Jesus, who is mighty to save, is there to rescue us. Such knowledge should encourage us to take cheer. In another place, the Lord teaches, **“Let thy heart be of good cheer before my face; and thou shalt bear record of my name, not only unto the Gentiles, but also unto the Jews; and thou shalt send forth my word unto the ends of the earth.”** (Doctrine & Covenants 112:4).

The good cheer of Jesus is most commonly associated with the remission of sin. Sin is a discouraging thing. Without Jesus, we have no power to overcome our evil actions. **“And what greater cheer and joy can come into a human heart than that which results from a remission of sins, from an assurance that one is free from earth stains, free from the bondage and sorrow that binds all sin-shackled souls? Then come the glad tidings: ‘Thy sins be forgiven thee’, which act in itself is a greater blessing than to be made whole physically, for all men will attain physical perfection in the resurrection, but only those who are free from sin will go on, in that day, to eternal life in the kingdom of God.”** (The Mortal Messiah: Volume 2, Collector’s Edition, Bruce R. McConkie, page 31).

- 8 - **thy sins** – The word “sins” is translated from the Greek word “ἁμαρτία” or “hamartia”. It means to be without a share in, to miss the mark, to err, to be mistaken, to miss or wander from the path of uprightness and honor, to do or go wrong, or to violate the law of God.

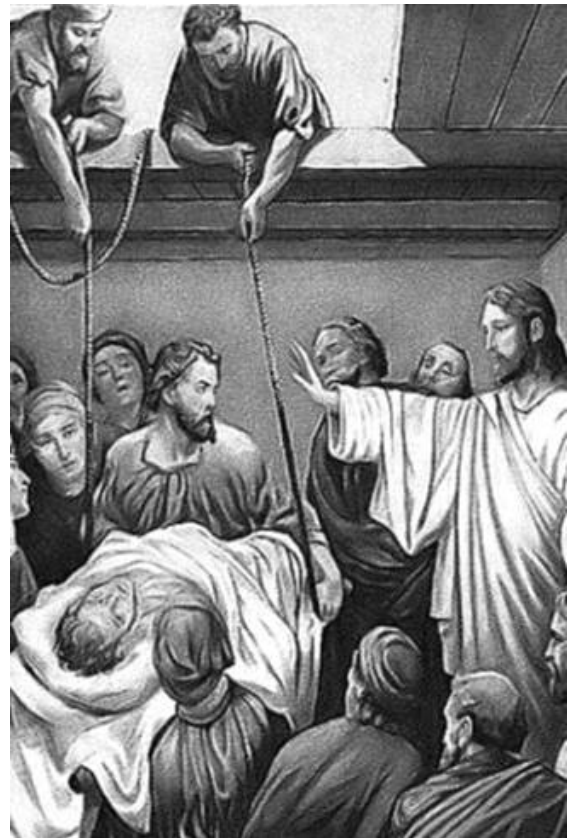
Sin always harms and hurts. It hinders spiritual growth. It distances us from God and His divine spirit. Sin is a barrier to eternal happiness that cannot be conquered without divine help. We have all sinned, and therefore we all have need of help in overcoming our various sins.

The paralytic man was a sinner as well. He was not excluded from this plague that is common to all in mortality. **“We ask, what sins? The man was physically unable to commit sin. But simple reflection tells us that his sins had to do with his thoughts, wherein he must have blamed God for his hopeless situation. When murmuring arose from the gathering about Jesus’ right to forgive sins, He stated clearly ‘that [they would] know that the Son of man hath power on earth to forgive sins’ and, as proof, then commanded the powerless man, ‘Arise, and take up thy bed, and go thy way into thine house,’ which he did. Plainly, Jesus had healed the man’s soul (as well as his spent body) by forgiving him his sins.”** (The Life and Teachings of Jesus Christ: From the Transfiguration through the Triumphal Entry, Volume 2, Edited by Richard Neitzel Holzapfel and Thomas A. Wayment, , page 111).

Our Father in Heaven has made great preparations for our mortal experience. He knew that we would face temptation in many varieties and types. He knew that righteousness was required to return home to Him qualified for exaltation. To Emma Smith He taught, **“A revelation I give unto you concerning my will; and if thou art faithful and walk in the paths of virtue before me, I will preserve thy life, and thou shalt receive an inheritance in Zion.”** (Doctrine & Covenants 25:2). Likewise, our path to exaltation is through a path of virtue before the Lord. A life unspotted by sin is one of the qualifications for dwelling in the presence of God.

Our Father in Heaven knew that we would come to mortality, and while trying to gain control of our mortal body and physical appetites, we would violate the laws of God. In other words, we would sin. God made preparations for such failures. A process of repentance was established. A Redeemer was called. Jesus accepted this call, and paid the price of justice. This allows us to receive forgiveness.

In August of 1831, Joseph Smith and a group of Elders met on the Banks of the Missouri River. The group was anxiously engaged in proclaiming the gospel. Jesus taught this group that He is **“your advocate, who knoweth the weakness of man and how to succor them who are tempted.”** (Doctrine and Covenants 62:1). It is through this knowledge that He performs His great and redeeming gift of forgiveness. To the Elders He declared, **“Nevertheless, ye are blessed, for the testimony which ye have borne is recorded in heaven for the angels to look upon; and they rejoice over you, and your sins are forgiven you.”** (Doctrine & Covenants 62:3).



- 9 - **be forgiven thee** – The phrase “be forgiven” is translated from the Greek word “ἀφιῆμι” or “aphiēmi”. It means to let go, let alone, disregard, omit, neglect, give up a debt, forgive or remit. **“The scribes interpret ‘your sins are forgiven’ as a claim that Jesus himself has the power of absolution, and angrily reject this claim.”** (Mark 1-8: A New translation with Introduction and Commentary, The Anchor Yale Bible, Joel Marcus, page 222). Only God could forgive sins. The scribes and Pharisees, at the time of Jesus, failed to understand that Jesus was a member of the Godhead. He is the great God, Jehovah. He is the Son of the Great God of Heaven, Father Elohim. Jesus was about His Father’s work, and therefore sought to forgive the repentant of their sins.

The forgiveness of the paralytic’s sins was indeed the actions of a God, but occurred only after the requirements had been met by the sinner. **“Forgiveness of sins comes only by compliance with that law of forgiveness which the Lord has ordained. That the paralytic here healed had complied with that law is evident; otherwise the Lord Jesus, whose law it is, would not have pronounced the heartening benediction. ‘Thy sins be forgiven thee.’ Our Lord’s ministry was in conformity, not in opposition, to his own laws.”** (The Doctrinal New Testament Commentary - The Gospels, Volume 1, Bruce R. McConkie, page 178).

From our vantage point, the healing of the paralytic and the forgiveness of his sins were two separate miracles. Jesus started by forgiving the man’s sins. This forgiveness could not be observed by the bystanders. It should be understood that the Jews saw the healing of disease and sickness as a forgiveness of sin. They considered the two divinely connected. Barclay wrote, **“In Palestine it was a universal belief that all sickness was the result of sin, and that no sickness could ever be cured until sin was forgiven. Rabbi Ami said, ‘There is no death without sin, and no pains without some transgression.’ Rabbi Alexander said, ‘The sick arises not from his sickness, until his sins are forgiven.’ Rabbi Chija ben Abba said, ‘No sick person is cured from sickness, until all his sins are forgiven him.’ This unbreakable connection between suffering and sin was part of the orthodox Jewish belief of the time of Jesus. For that reason there is no doubt at all that this man could never have been cured, until he was convinced that his sins had been forgiven. It is most probable that he had indeed been a sinner, and that he was convinced that his illness was the result of his sin, as it may very well have been; and without the assurance of forgiveness healing could never have come to him.”** (The Gospel of Matthew, Volume 1, The Daily Study Bible Series - Revised Edition, William Barclay, page 334).

Jesus forgave the man's sins, which is more important than curing any earthly illness or disease, but so that the Jew would know that He had the power to forgive sins He directly healed the paralysis that had infirmed the man.

**10 - certain** – The word “certain” is translated from the Greek word “τις” or “tis”. It means a certain, a certain one, some, some time, or a while. **“Though the text is silent on how many of the Jewish leadership were present, it is not silent on their disdain for the Master.”** (Miracles of the New Testament: A Guide to the Symbolic Messages, Alonzo L. Gaskill, page 71).

**11 - scribes** – The word “scribes” is translated from the Greek word “γραμματεὺς” or “grammateus”. It means a clerk, scribe, especially a public servant, secretary, recorder, whose office and influence differed in different states. In the Bible, a scribe is a man learned in the Mosaic law and in the sacred writings, an interpreter, or teacher. Scribes examined the more difficult and subtle questions of the law; added to the Mosaic law decisions of various kinds thought to elucidate its meaning and scope, and did this to the detriment of their religion. Since the advice of men, skilled in the law, was needed in the examination of the causes and the solution of the difficult questions, they were often employed by the Sanhedrin; and are mentioned in connection with the priests and elders of the people. The word scribe, **“In postexilic Israel it came to be used of one learned in the Mosaic Law...Luke uses the term only for Jewish specialists in the Law, whom he sometimes calls nomikoi, ‘lawyers’.”** (The Gospel according to Luke I-IX: A New translation with Introduction and Commentary, The Anchor Yale Bible, Joseph A. Fitzmyer, page 583). They are also referred to as “doctors” of the law.

The scribes were so learned in the law that they most often ignored the direction of the spirit in favor of their own knowledge and expertise. **“And the Pharisees and scribes can represent those who, no matter what they are shown, will doubt the truth when it is presented to them.”** (Miracles of the New Testament: A Guide to the Symbolic Messages, Alonzo L. Gaskill, page 76).

**12 - within themselves** – The word “themselves” is translated from the Greek word “ἑαυτοῦ” or “heautou”. It means himself, herself, itself, or themselves.

The scribes and Pharisees silently passed judgment on Jesus, thinking unkind and unrighteous thoughts against the Messiah. Rather than voicing their lack of understanding to the Savior for the purpose of being taught, they kept secret their thoughts; which was self condemning before God.

**13 - blasphemeth** – The word “blasphemeth” is translated from the Greek word “βλασφημέω” or “blasphēmeō”. It means to speak reproachfully, rail at, revile, calumniate, blaspheme, or to be evil spoken of. A dictionary definition of the word blasphemy says that it is the act or offense of speaking sacrilegiously about God or sacred things. It includes any profane speaking. Fitzmyer clarifies the translation of this verse as follows: **“Who is this who speaks so blasphemously? Literally, ‘who utters blasphemies.’ Luke reformulates the Marcan clause, ‘Why does the man speak thus? He blasphemeth.’”** (The Gospel according to Luke I-IX: A New translation with Introduction and Commentary, The Anchor Yale Bible, Joseph A. Fitzmyer, page 583).



The priests of the Temple regularly pronounced forgiveness of sins upon the patrons of that sacred site. How then was Jesus a blasphemer? In the minds of the scribes, Jehovah had prescribed a specific process of sacrifice and repentance to obtain forgiveness. Once a patron had completed the prescribed process, the priest proclaimed them forgiven. They made this proclamation as witness to the completion of the proper process. They did not believe that the priest granted forgiveness, but rather served as a witness, knowing that once the elements had been properly met that God would grant forgiveness. Jesus, on the other hand, did not stand as a witness of the paralytic man's proper observance of the temple rite. Quite the contrary, He seemingly ignored the process as they understood it, and proclaimed the man forgiven as though He was God. The scribes and Pharisees **“heard the words spoken to the paralytic, and were angered thereat. In their hearts they accused Jesus of the awful offense of blasphemy, which consists essentially in claiming for human or demon power the prerogatives of God, or in dishonoring God by ascribing to Him attributes short of perfection.”** (Jesus the Christ, James E. Talmage, page 154).

The Jews considered blasphemy a serious offense of the Law. In severe cases, it was punishable by death. In any case, a convicted blasphemer was a criminal and faced serious consequences. **“The Jewish attitude toward it is derived from Leviticus 24:10-11, 14-16,23, where it refers to an abusive use of the ‘name of Yahweh’.** It was to be punished by death. According to later rabbinical tradition, crystallized in the Mishnah **‘the blasphemer is not culpable unless he pronounces the name itself. This tradition may represent the Pharisaic tendency to mitigate penal laws, especially those involving capital punishment.’**” (The Gospel according to Luke I-IX: A New translation with Introduction and Commentary, The Anchor Yale Bible, Joseph A. Fitzmyer, page 583).

A New translation with Introduction and Commentary, The Anchor Yale Bible, Joseph A. Fitzmyer, page 583).

Jesus' proclamation that the man's sins were forgiven essentially placed Jesus in the position of deity. It suggested that Jesus had command over judgment and mercy. The Jewish leaders, doubting His ability, passed judgment in their hearts. Their accusation was that Jesus was placing Himself in the role of God. Fitzmyer records, **“In most of the New Testament passages, where the charge is leveled against Jesus, the implication is that he has somehow claimed or implied that he is an equal of Yahweh.”** (The Gospel according to Luke I-IX: A New translation with Introduction and Commentary, The Anchor Yale Bible, Joseph A. Fitzmyer, page 584).

The scribes and Pharisees considered themselves experts in the scriptures. Though they knew them in letter, they failed to understand them in spirit. Had they fully understood them, they would have recognized Jesus through the scriptures. They would also have seen the blasphemy of their own actions. Joseph Smith revealed, **“Search the Scriptures, for they testify of things that these apostates would gravely pronounce blasphemy.”** (Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith, Selected and arranged by the Historian of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints - Joseph Fielding Smith, page 418).

**14 - knowing their thoughts** – The word “thoughts” is translated from the Greek word “ἐνθύμησις” or “enthymēsis”. It means a thinking, consideration or thoughts. The Codex Sinaiticus translates the word “knowing” as “perceiving”. (Codex Sinaiticus: The H.T. Anderson New Testament, Translated by Henry Tompkins Anderson, Matthew, Chapter 2, Verse 4, page 23). **“Jesus frequently exercised the prophetic gift of reading the thoughts of others. Except by revelation from the Spirit, the thoughts of men cannot be known to other men.”** (The Doctrinal New Testament Commentary - The Gospels, Volume 1, Bruce R. McConkie, page 179).

This scriptural passage in the story of the healing of the paralytic is a fulfillment of prophecy. **“In Sanh. 93 b this reading of the thoughts is regarded as the fulfillment of Is. Xi 3, and as one of the marks of the Messiah, which Bar Kokhabh not possessing was killed.”** (The Life and Times of Jesus the Messiah, Volume 1, Alfred Edersheim, page 505). The prophecy of Isaiah reads, **“And shall make him of quick understanding in the fear of the Lord: and he shall not judge after the sight of his eyes, neither reprove after the hearing of his ears:”** (Isaiah 11:3). Jesus used the quick understanding of the spirit to know their thoughts. Utilizing the spirit of God, Jesus passed divine judgement and reproveth them.



15 - **Wherefore** – The word “Wherefore” is translated from the Greek word “ὡς” or “hinati”. It means for what purpose, wherefore or why. The Codex Sinaiticus translates the word “Wherefore” as “Why”. (Codex Sinaiticus: The H.T. Anderson New Testament, Translated by Henry Tompkins Anderson, Matthew, Chapter 2, Verse 4, page 23).

16 - **think ye** – The word “think” is translated from the Greek word “ἐνθυμέομαι” or “enthymeomai”. It means to bring to mind, revolve in mind, ponder, to think, or to deliberate.

Our thoughts are the essence of who we really are. Thoughts always precede action. Evil and unrighteous thoughts reveal the desires of one’s heart. Whether acted upon or not, thoughts show our most inner wants.

The Scribes and Pharisees had no faith in Jesus, as was evidenced by their thoughts. They did not believe that He could forgive sin, and therefore believed his words to be empty. **“The experts in the law were hoist with their own petard. On their own stated beliefs the man could not be cured, unless he was forgiven. He was cured, therefore he was forgiven. Therefore, Jesus’ claim to forgive sin must be true. Jesus must have left a completely baffled set of legal experts; and, worse, he must have left them in a baffled rage. Here was something that must be dealt with; if this went on, all orthodox religion would be shattered and destroyed.”** (The Gospel of Mark, The Daily Study Bible Series - Revised Edition, William Barclay, page 50).

17 - **evil** – The word “evil” is translated from the Greek word “πονηρός” or “ponēros”. It means full of labors, annoyances, hardships, perils, or toils. It also means to be bad, or of a bad nature or condition. Evil is anything contrary to the wishes and desires of God. It is God that defines what is evil and what is righteous. Throughout the history of the world men have tried to be the definer of such. This is a sin in and of itself. We must look to God for the very definition of righteousness. Isaiah, speaking on this topic, wrote, **“Woe unto them that call evil good, and good evil; that put darkness for light, and light for darkness; that put bitter for sweet, and sweet for bitter!”** (Isaiah 5:20).

18 - **in your hearts** – The word “hearts” is translated from the Greek word “καρδία” or “kardia”. It means the heart. The heart symbolizes the center of being, desire, love, understanding, courage, and the temple of God. (An Illustrated Encyclopedia of Traditional Symbols, J.C. Cooper, page 82).

19 - **whether** – The word “whether” is translated from the Greek word “τίς” or “tis”. It means who, which, or what. The Codex Sinaiticus translates the word “whether” as “which”. (Codex Sinaiticus: The H.T. Anderson New Testament, Translated by Henry Tompkins Anderson, Matthew, Chapter 2, Verse 5, page 23). Joseph Smith provides clarity for this passage in both Matthew and Luke’s account. In the inspired translation of Matthew, he dictated, **“For is it not easier to say, Thy sins be forgiven thee, than to say, Arise and walk?”** (Joseph Smith Translation of Matthew 9:5). For Luke he records, **“Does it require more power to forgive sins than to make the sick rise up and walk?”** (Joseph Smith Translation of Luke 5:23).

20 - **easier** – The word “easier” is translated from the Greek word “εὐκόπος” or “eukopos”. It means with easy labor, or easy.

The connection between sin and illness was inseparable in the minds of the apostate Jewish hierarchy. One could not have a forgiveness of sin without physical healing. The question of “which is easier” would have been rhetorical. Their beliefs would have made them one and the same. When Jesus forgave the man of his sins, the scribes and Pharisees would not have been able to detect the effectiveness of Jesus’ proclamation. **“Now remember that these scribes believed that no one could get up and walk unless his sins were forgiven. If Jesus was able to make this man get up and walk, then that was unanswerable proof that the man’s sins were forgiven, and that Jesus’ claim was true.”** (The Gospel of Matthew, Volume 1, The Daily Study Bible Series - Revised Edition, William Barclay, page 335).

21 - **Arise** – The word “” is translated from the Greek word “ἐγείρω egeirō” or “”. It means to arouse or cause to rise, to awake to cause to appear or to bring before the public.

Faith is a required element for healing. Faith is demonstrated by faithfulness, and faithfulness is also required from those who want the blessings of heaven. Faithfulness is the process of action upon that which we believe. It is common for blessings to require something on our behalf to demonstrate faithfulness. For example, Naaman the leper demonstrated his faith by washing in the river Jordan seven times as prerequisite to being healed of leprosy.

The paralytic man was commanded to “arise”. Such an act was a demonstration of faith. The man would be required to act upon his faith and stand even though the thought of standing would have been logically impossible. He was required to show that he believed that with God all things are possible. He arose, and therefore he was healed. **“The healing establishes the reality of the forgiveness. As was already the case in Mark 1:31, the use of the language of ‘raising’ may imply for informed readers that the power by which Jesus heals the man is the same power by which God will raise Jesus himself from the dead.”** (Mark 1-8: A New translation with Introduction and Commentary, The Anchor Yale Bible, Joel Marcus, page 222).

God is capable and all powerful. He does not vary or change. In matters of the spirit, we are commonly the variable in the equation. When the prophet Alma drew upon the perfect power of the priesthood to heal Zeezrom, he said, **“O Lord our God, have mercy on this man, and heal him according to his faith which is in Christ.”** (Alma 15:10). God was ready and able to heal, but Zeezrom needed faith to bring those powers to bear upon him.

Faith is best demonstrated by arising from our wicked ways to a life of righteousness. We cannot remain in a life of wickedness and think that we can draw upon the powers of heaven. Jesus taught the Nephites after His resurrection. He taught them the correlation between righteous living and being healed. The Book of Mormon teaches, **“O all ye that are spared because ye were more righteous than they, will ye not now return unto me, and repent of your sins, and be converted, that I may heal you?”** (3 Nephi 9:13).







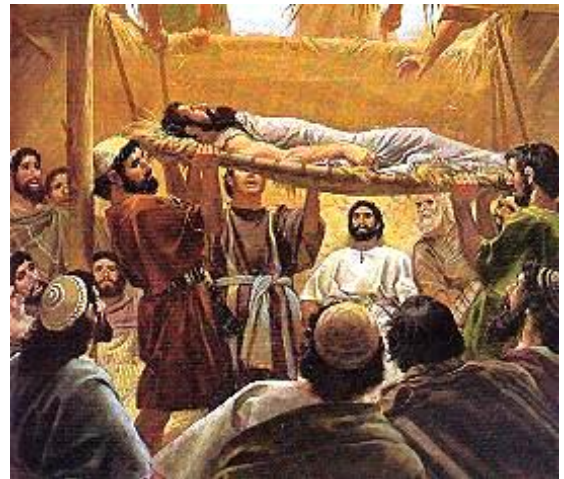


22 - **walk** – The word “walk” is translated from the Greek word “περιπατέω” or “peripateō”. It means to walk, to make one’s way, to progress, or to make due use of opportunities. The Hebrew equivalent for “to live”.

If the word “arise” indicates an act of faith, then “walking” represents the act of continuing in faith unto exaltation. We are healed so that we might further work the of the Lord, both in our own life and the lives of those around us. God does not heal us so that we might continue a life of wickedness. The paralytic man was healed so that he could progress towards eternal live.

23 - **know** – The word “know” is translated from the Greek word “εἶδω” or “eidō”. It means to see, or perceiver with the eyes. It also means to perceive with any of the senses or to discern. The word is being used here in reference to testimony. The Lord proves His ability to forgive sins, by healing the paralytic man. **“Rightly understood, this event in the life of our Lord was visible and irrefutable proof that he was the Messiah; and it was so recognized by those among whom he ministered.”** (The Doctrinal New Testament Commentary - The Gospels, Volume 1, Bruce R. McConkie, page 177).

We must remember that the Lord’s response in the account of paralytic man was performed in such a way as to respond to the apostate beliefs of the Jews of His day. We should not expect that the forgiveness of sins will result in physical healing. In fact, our physical ailments may represent blessings from heaven, which are designed to purify and develop us. Gaskill wrote, **“If a person is not healed physically, this does not mean that the person has not been healed spiritually. Some physical ailments are meant to be a part of our personal mortal challenge. Thus, while God may not grant that the illness be removed, the spiritual cleansing would still be valid.”** (Miracles of the New Testament: A Guide to the Symbolic Messages, Alonzo L. Gaskill, page 78).



24 - **Son of man** – The word “man” is translated from the Greek word “ἄνθρωπος” or “anthrōpos”. It means a human being whether male or female. The term “son of man” is often used to refer to the offspring of mortal men. The term “Son of Man” is used as a title for Jesus Christ. The word “Son” is capitalized out of reverence for His sacred relationship to God the Father as His literal Son. The term “Man” is properly capitalized as it refers to one of the many names or titles for God the Father. He is sometimes call “Man of Holiness” making reference to the fact that He is indeed an immortal and Celestial Man. Hence, Jesus is **“The Son of Man. This is the first appearance of this title for Jesus in the Lucan Gospel; in all twenty-four times, always in the arthrous form, ‘ho huios tou anthropou’.”** (The Gospel according to Luke I-IX: A New translation with Introduction and Commentary, The Anchor Yale Bible, Joseph A. Fitzmyer, page 584).

25 - **power** – The word “power” is translated from the Greek word “ἐξουσία” or “exousia”. It means power. It is often used for the power of choice. It is also used for physical and metal power, power of authority (influence), the power of right (privilege), and the power of rule or government. It is also used to mean authority. The Codex Sinaiticus translates the word “power” as “authority”. (Codex Sinaiticus: The H.T. Anderson New Testament, Translated by Henry Tompkins Anderson, Matthew, Chapter 2, Verse 6, page 23). **“The power of the Lord happened to be with him. Lit. ‘the power of the Lord was that he might heal (people),’ or ‘was for his healing’ (eis to iastai auton).”** (The Gospel according to Luke I-IX: A New translation with Introduction and Commentary, The Anchor Yale Bible, Joseph A. Fitzmyer, pages 581-582).

26 - **earth** – The word “earth” is translated from the Greek word “γῆ” or “gē”. It means arable land, as opposed to sea or water.

27 - **forgive sins** – There is a significant relationship between the Greek and Hebrew words for repentance and forgiveness. The Greek word for repentance is “μετάνοια” or “metanoia”. It means a change of mind for the better. The Hebrew equivalent is “נחם” or “nocham” meaning sorrow. The word “forgive” is translated from the Greek word “ἀφίημι” or “aphiēmi”. It means to send away, divorce, yield up, expire, let go, let alone, disregard, or go away from. The Hebrew word for forgive is “נָסָא” or “nasa”. It means to lift, bear or carry. Linguistically, one can see the symbiotic relationship between the two words. In Greek, repentance is the turning away from, while forgiveness is the disregarding. In Hebrew, repentance is sorrow or regret while forgiveness is the lifting of the burden.



**“For nonmembers of the Church, forgiveness is gained through repentance and baptism for the remission of sins under the hands of a legal administrator. Sins committed after baptism are forgiven through repentance and renewing the covenant made in the waters of baptism. Godly sorrow, abandonment of sin, confession, restitution, and renewed obedience are part of the process of cleansing oneself from sin.”** (The Doctrinal New Testament Commentary - The Gospels, Volume 1, Bruce R. McConkie, page 178). The Savior would not violate eternal laws and forgive a man who was not qualified for forgiveness. We can safely assume that the paralytic man was a baptized member of the church. We can further assume that he had successfully performed the necessary steps required for divine forgiveness.

It is interesting that paralysis is symbolic for sin, or at least the consequences of sin. Sin paralyzes us spiritually, and hinders our ability to progress. **“While we are not saying that sin was the cause of the paralyzed boy/man’s ailment (though that would have been a common belief in Jesus’s day), what we are saying is that paralysis generally can be a teaching device that helps us to ponder the debilitating efforts of sin**

**on our spirituality”** (Miracles of the New Testament: A Guide to the Symbolic Messages, Alonzo L. Gaskill, page 78).

The Jews had lost sight of the mercy and love that is inherent in our Father in Heaven’s character. There seems to have been a belief that God is punitive in His approach to His children. It was believed that one could not be forgiven unless they suffered appropriately. **“It was argued by the Rabbis, that, if the loss of an eye or a tooth liberated a slave from bondage, much more would the sufferings of the whole body free the soul from guilt; and again, that Scripture itself indicated this by the use of the word ‘covenant’ alike in connection with salt which rendered the sacrifices meet for the altar, and sufferings, which did the like for the soul by cleansing away sin.”** (The Life and Times of Jesus the Messiah, Volume 1, Alfred Edersheim, page 504).



The Lord does use natural consequences to humble His children; however, the consequences of sin were fully paid by Jesus. We need not suffer in our sins any more than we allow ourselves, nor do we have to suffer to the ends of justice. Our suffering in sin need only last as long as it takes to repent. The Lord declared through the Prophet Joseph Smith, **“There are those among you who have sinned; but verily I say, for this once, for mine own glory, and for the salvation of souls, I have forgiven you your sins.”** (Doctrine & Covenants 64:3). With His great and infinite atonement, Jesus established a pattern to partake of the gift of forgiveness. Part of this pattern includes the ordinance of the Sacrament. **“For, behold, I say unto you, that it mattereth not what ye shall eat or what ye shall drink when ye partake of the sacrament, if it so be that ye do it with an eye single to my glory—remembering unto the Father my body which was laid down for you, and my blood which was shed for the remission of your sins.”** (Doctrine & Covenants 27:2).

Part of the confusion between the forgiving of sins and the healing of sickness is the fact that God has the power to cure both and the atonement of Jesus made it all possible. The Apostle James understood this as he wrote to the saints of his time, **“Is any sick among you? let him call for the elders of the church; and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord: And the prayer of faith shall save the sick, and the Lord shall raise him up; and if he have committed sins, they shall be forgiven him.”** (James 5:14-15).

**28 - take up** – The phrase “take up” is translated from the Greek word “αἶρω” or “airō”. It means to raise up, elevate, lift up, to take upon one’s self, or to bear away.

**29 - house** – The word “house” is translated from the Greek word “οἶκος” or “oikos”. It means a house, or a dwelling place. The house symbolizes protection, the center of the world, and the universe. (An Illustrated Encyclopedia of Traditional Symbols, J.C. Cooper, page 86). The Greek word can also imply a “home”. Therefore, there are those that speculate



that the healing of the paralytic man occurred in Jesus’ own home or the home of His mother. **“Capernaum was Jesus’ own city, where his mother and half brothers and sisters lived (Matthew 4:13).”** (The Four Gospels - Verse by verse, D. Kelly Ogden and Andrew C. Skinner, page 246). The problem with that theory is that there is no evidence of Jesus ever owning a home. Regardless, **“His place of abode in Capernaum was well known, and word was soon noised about that He was in the house.”** (Jesus the Christ, James E. Talmage, page 143). If Jesus didn’t have His own home then **“someone had opened his home up to Him that He might teach the people.”** (Miracles of the New Testament: A Guide to the Symbolic Messages, Alonzo L. Gaskill, page 71).

Jesus did have a headquarters, so to speak, in Capernaum. **“In several places, Mark has indeterminate references to ‘a house’, which would seem to imply that Jesus had some regular home or lodging in Capernaum. Matthew’s version, in all instances where it parallels Mark, has no such reference.”** (Matthew: A New translation with Introduction and Commentary, The Anchor Yale Bible, W.F. Albright and C.S. Mann, page 102). Probably the most accepted theory regarding the “house” was that it was the home of Peter. Jesus had already performed many miracles there, including the healing of Peter’s mother-in-law. **“Presumably the man sick with palsy was healed in Peter’s home in Capernaum.”** (The Doctrinal New Testament Commentary - The Gospels, Volume 1, Bruce R. McConkie, page 179).

The story proceeds that **“no sooner, ‘was it heard that He was in the house’, or, as some have rendered it, ‘that He was at home’, that so many flocked to the dwelling of Peter, which at that period may have been ‘the house’ or temporary ‘home’ of the Savior, as to fill its limited space to overflowing, and even to crowd out to the door and beyond it.”** (The Life and Times of Jesus the Messiah, Volume 1, Alfred Edersheim, page 501). For the sake of discussion, we will assume that it was Peter’s house. With such a crowd **“The house of Peter could not have been a small one.”** (The Life and Times of Jesus the Messiah, Volume 1, Alfred Edersheim, page 502).

Based on archeological studies and ancient records, the average homes in the area at the time of Jesus were not very large. **“The Mishnah calls a small house one that is 9 feet long by 12 broad, and a large house one that is 12 feet long by 15 broad, and adds that a dining hall is 15 feet square, the height being always computed at half the length and breadth.”** (The Life and Times of Jesus the Messiah, Volume 1, Alfred Edersheim, page 502). That translates into houses that are between 108 square feet and 180 square feet. **“Given the size of the average home in those days, it would not take many people to fill the house. However, the implication of the story is that there may have been a significant number gathered on this occasion.”** (Miracles of the New Testament: A Guide to the Symbolic Messages, Alonzo L. Gaskill, page 77). The presumed ruins of Peter’s house in Capernaum measure 27.4 feet square or 751 square feet. This would have been a significantly large house for the area, and it would have accommodated a larger crowd than a normal house.

It is difficult for us to understand how such a crowd found its way into a private dwelling. We must understand that their culture was far different from ours. **“Life in Palestine was very public. In the morning the door of the house was opened and anyone who wished might come out and in. The door was never shut unless a man deliberately wished for privacy; an open door meant an open invitation for all to come in. In the humbler houses, such as this must have been, there was no entrance hall; the door opened directly on to the street. So, in no time, a crowd had filled the house to capacity and jammed the pavement round the door; and they were all eagerly listening to what Jesus had to say.”** (The Gospel of Mark, The Daily Study Bible Series - Revised Edition, William Barclay, pages 46-47). Additionally, archeologists have unearthed a large courtyard outside of Peter’s house, which was shared by several homes. It is suspected that the homes were occupied by relatives. This courtyard could have accommodated additional peoples.

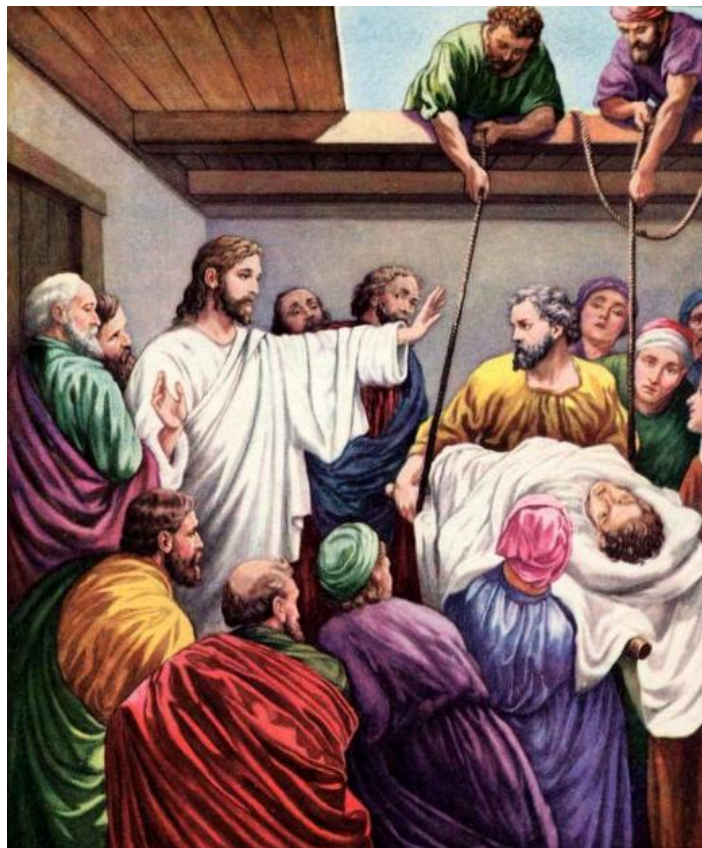
As a side bar, Edersheim made a study of housing prices at the time of Jesus. He wrote, **“Another source of information is derived from what we know of the price and rental of houses. We read of a house as costing ten (of course, gold) dinars, which would make the price 250 silver dinars, or between 71. and 81. of our money. This must, however, have been ‘a small house’, since the rental of such is stated to have been from 7s. to 28s. a year, while that of a large house is computed at about 91. a year, and that of a courtyard at about 14s. a year.”** (The Life and Times of Jesus the Messiah, Volume 1, Alfred Edersheim, page 502). In simple terms a dinar of gold weights 4.5 grams, making 10 dinars of Gold 45 grams in weight. That is equivalent to \$1,350 in today’s money for a house of about 108 square feet.

**30 - arose** – The word “arose” is translated from the Greek word “ἐγείρω” or “egeirō”. It means to arouse or cause to rise. It is often used in relation to sleep, or resurrection.

**31 - departed** – The word “depart” is translated from the Greek word “ἀπερχομαι” or “aperchomai”. It means to go away, or depart.



- 32 - **multitudes** – The phrase “when the multitude” is translated from the Greek word “ὄχλος” or “ochlos”. It means a crowd, multitude, or collection of people. It is often used to refer to groups of common people in contrast to rulers or leading men.
- 33 - **saw it** – The phrase “saw it” is translated from the Greek word “εἶδω” or “eidō”. It means to see, or perceiver with the eyes. It also means to perceive with any of the senses or to discern.
- 34 - **marvelled** – The word “marvelled” is translated from the Greek word “θαυμάζω” or “thaumazō”. It means to wonder, to wonder at, marvel or to be had in admiration. The Codex Sinaiticus translates the phrase “the multitude saw it, they marvelled” as “the multitude saw and were afraid”. (Codex Sinaiticus: The H.T. Anderson New Testament, Translated by Henry Tompkins Anderson, Matthew, Chapter 2, Verse 8, page 23).
- 35 - **glorified God** – The word “glorified” is translated from the Greek word “δοξάζω” or “doxazō”. It means to think, suppose or to be of an opinion. It is also used of praise, glory, celebration or splendor.
- 37 - **again** – The word “again” is translated from the Greek word “πάλιν” or “palin”. It means anew or again. This returning “again” may have reference to a return to Peter’s house where we know Jesus had lodged before. It might also represent a returned, again, to Capernaum. **“The return to Capernaum was ‘after days’, which, in common Jewish phraseology, meant a considerable interval. As we reckon, it was winter, which would equally account for Christ’s return to Capernaum, and for His teaching in the house.”** (The Life and Times of Jesus the Messiah, Volume 1, Alfred Edersheim, page 501). Winter begins on the 21<sup>st</sup> of December and ends on the 21<sup>st</sup> of March. The setting for this chapter is estimated to have occurred prior to the Passover in 28ce, which took place on March 27<sup>th</sup> and after the blooming of the lilies of the field on or about March 1<sup>st</sup>. This would coincide with Edersheim’s placement of the event in the winter.



Fitzmyer placed the return, again, to Capernaum after Jesus returned from the Desert. He wrote, **“Jesus has left the ‘desert places’ and is again in the midst of a crowd.”** (The Gospel according to Luke I-IX: A New translation with Introduction and Commentary, The Anchor Yale Bible, Joseph A. Fitzmyer, page 580). I find it more likely that Jesus returned again after delivering the Sermon on the Mount.

- 38 - **Capernaum** – The word “Capernaum” is translated from the Greek word “Καφαρναούμ” or “Kapharnaoum”. Literally translated it means “village of comfort”.

At this point, Capernaum has become the headquarters of Jesus’ church. **“John Chrysostom (circa AD 344-407) wrote, ‘Bethlehem bare Him, Nazareth nurtured Him, [but] Capernaum had Him continuously as an inhabitant.’** (Miracles of the New Testament: A Guide to the Symbolic Messages, Alonzo L. Gaskill, page 73). As seems customary, **“In Capernaum he stays with Peter, and he is now in the home of that chief of his apostolic witnesses.”** (The Mortal Messiah: Volume 2, Collector’s Edition, Bruce R. McConkie, page 31).



Capernaum was a special place in that the inhabitants demonstrated faith in Jesus. With this faith, the Lord was able to perform miracles of every kind. They were receptive to His word, and acted upon it. Their approach to Jesus is clearly illustrated in the four friends that sought to get their paralytic friend into the presence of the Master. They believed!



They knew His power, and didn't seem to question Jesus' ability to command the powers of heaven. It is no wonder that **"the miracle took place in Capernaum, which had become Jesus' adopted Hometown."** (Miracles of the New Testament: A Guide to the Symbolic Messages, Alonzo L. Gaskill, page 73).

- 39 - **after some days** – The phrase "some days" is translated from the Greek word "ἡμέρα" or "hēmera". It means the day, as in the interval between sunrise and sunset.

The small phrase "after some days" has caused much confusion and speculation regarding the chronological order of events. Elder Talmage places the healing of the paralytic some days after the healing of the leper. He wrote, **"Some days" after the healing of the leper, Jesus was again in Capernaum. The details of His employment during the interval are not specified; but, we may be sure that His work continued, for His characteristic occupation was that of going about doing good.**" (Jesus the Christ, James E. Talmage, page 153). At the same time, Farrar places the event after Jesus sailed across the Sea of Galilee and landed in Gennesareth. Farrar wrote, **"The events just described had happened apparently in the early morning, and it might perhaps be noon when Jesus reached once more the Plain of Gennesareth. People had recognized the sail of His returning vessel, and long before He reached land the multitudes had lined the shore, and were waiting for Him, and received Him gladly."** (The Story of a Beautiful Life: Farrar's Life of Christ, The New 20th Century Edition, 1900, Canon Farrar, D.D., F.R.S., page 220). There are others who present other theories based on the elapsed time of "some days". Farrar does, however, accept the fact that the healing of the paralytic and the leper were at least relatively close in chronology. He later wrote, **"If we may here accept as chronological the order of St. Matthew – to whom, as we shall see hereafter, this must have been a very memorial day – Jesus went first into the town of Capernaum, which was now regarded as 'His own city'. He went at once to the house – probably the house of St. Peter – which He ordinarily used when staying at Capernaum."** (The Story of a Beautiful Life: Farrar's Life of Christ, The New 20th Century Edition, 1900, Canon Farrar, D.D., F.R.S., page 220).

- 40 - **noised** – The word "noised" is translated from the Greek word "ἀκούω" or "akouō". It means to be endowed with the faculty of hearing; not deaf. It can also mean to hear something or learn by hearing. The Codex Sinaiticus translates the word "noised" as "reported". (Codex Sinaiticus: The H.T. Anderson New Testament, Translated by Henry Tompkins Anderson, Mark, Chapter 2, Verse 1, page 68). This passage may be paraphrased as **"Jesus was in Capernaum and word quickly spread of His presence."** (Miracles of the New Testament: A Guide to the Symbolic Messages, Alonzo L. Gaskill, page 71).

- 41 - **straightway** – The word "straightway" is translated from the Greek word "εὐθέως" or "euthēōs". It means straightway, immediately, or forthwith. The Codex Sinaiticus omits the word "straightway" from Mark 2. (Codex Sinaiticus: The H.T. Anderson New Testament, Translated by Henry Tompkins Anderson, Mark, Chapter 2, Verse 3, page 68).

- 42 - **many** – The word "many" is translated from the Greek word "πολύς" or "polys". It means many, much, and large. Talmage describes the "many" as **"a great throng gathered, so that there was no room to receive them; even the doorway was crowded, and later comers could not get near the Master."** (Jesus the Christ, James E. Talmage, page 153).



So how many people were actually gathered? We are left to speculate; however, it can be an informed speculation. Archeological findings show that Peter's house was about 751 square feet. If people were jammed into the space like sardines, allowing only 4 square feet per person, the room may have held as much as 187 people. Of course this left no room for Jesus to properly teach. It is more likely that the room held a rather full crowd between 50 and 75 people. The adjacent court yard, of similar size, may have held an additional 75 to 100 people, most of whom would have been standing. **"The crowd of those who gathered to hear was so great that it filled the entire house, leaving no room for additional guests. Even the door and the windows were blocked with the bodies of the believing and the curious."** (Miracles of the New Testament: A Guide to the Symbolic Messages, Alonzo L. Gaskill, page 71). It is likely that over 200 people were attending lining the streets, the causeways, windows, and any other space that would give them access to Jesus.

- 43 - **gathered together** – The phrase "were gathered together" is translated from the Greek word "συνάγω" or "synagō". It means to gather together, collect, or assemble. The Codex Sinaiticus translated the phrase "gathered together" as "came together": (Codex Sinaiticus: The H.T. Anderson New Testament, Translated by Henry Tompkins Anderson, Mark, Chapter 2, Verse 2, page 68).

One of the difficulties in picturing the setting of this miracle is the fact that so many people came to see and hear Jesus from what is believed to be a typical Jewish Home. The homes of the average Jew were modest and small. The common and poor lived in one story dwellings with a small room that served many purposes. Bedrolls or thin mattresses were placed on the ground at night for sleeping, and stowed during the day as the room was used for dining, work, entertaining, and every other home function. As homes were built for more prosperous Jews, the ground dimensions grew slightly, but elements like courtyards and second stories became more common place. More prosperous homes also added rooms for guest and other activities. Additionally, the courtyards grew with wealth. **"Though we know a good deal of the structure of Jewish houses, we feel it difficult to be sure of the exact place which the Savior occupied of this occasion. Meetings for religious study and discussion were certainly held in the aliyah or upper chamber. But, on many grounds, such a locale seems utterly unsuited to the requirements of the narrative. Similar objections attach to the idea that it was the front room of one of those low houses occupied by the poor."** (The Life and Times of Jesus the Messiah, Volume 1, Alfred Edersheim, page 501).

A larger home, which Peter's house seemed to be, would have surely had a second story. Such a setting would allow Jesus to be visible to a larger crowd. Though not stated, or proven, many leading scholars have accepted that this must have been the setting. Edersheim, who I have come to have great respect for, wrote, **"Jesus is speaking the Word, standing in the covered gallery that ran round the courtyard of such houses, and opened into the various apartments. Perhaps He was standing within the entrance of the guest-chamber, while the Scribes were sitting within that apartment, or beside Him in the gallery. The courtyard before Him is thronged, out into the street. All are absorbedly listening to the Master."** (The Life and Times of Jesus the Messiah, Volume 1, Alfred Edersheim, page 502).

The fact is, we do not know the layout of the house Jesus healed the paralytic in, nor do we know where Jesus positioned Himself to teach. Freeman seems to summarize the possibilities well. He wrote, **“From the second verse it appears that the crowd of people was so great as to fill, not only the court, but the porch. The precise position of the Saviour is not stated. He may have been in the general reception-room, which opened into the court at the side opposite to the porch, with the people behind him in the room, and before him in the court; or, if the house were two stories high, he may have been on the gallery which surrounded the court, the people thronging the gallery as well as the court below.”** (Manners and Customs of the Bible, James M. Freeman, pages 397).



- 44 - **no room** – The Codex Sinaiticus translates the phrase “there was no room to receive them” as “the house could no longer contain them”. (Codex Sinaiticus: The H.T. Anderson New Testament, Translated by Henry Tompkins Anderson, Mark, Chapter 2, Verse 2, page 68). Elder McConkie wrote, **“The house, apparently a large one, is filled; the living quarters, the guest chamber, the bedrooms, all are crowded with people; and throngs of others are massed around the door and out into the streets.”** (The Mortal Messiah: Volume 2, Collector’s Edition, Bruce R. McConkie, page 31).

As stated in footnote #42, I would estimate over 200 people were gathered to the house where Jesus was. About 75 to 100 people were gathered in the home itself, and the rest were gathered around the outside. The large crowd was compacted as they each tried to get nearer to the Savior. As is typical with large crowds, there was little to no room to maneuver through the crowd. **“It was commonplace in the first century for homes to be rectangular or square in shape and, whether of a single or double story, to have a set of stairs (sometimes in the back) that led to the roof. Thus, the four men who carried their friend to the top likely did so by those stairs.”** (Miracles of the New Testament: A Guide to the Symbolic Messages, Alonzo L. Gaskill, page 73).

- 45 - **receive them** – The phrase “room to receive” is translated from the Greek word “χωρέω” or “chōreō”. It means to leave space, to make room, to yield, to go forward, advance, proceed, or to have space to receive something.
- 46 - **not so much** – The phrase “not so much” is translated from the Greek word “μηδέ” or “mēde”. It means and not, but not, nor or not.
- 47 - **about the door** – The word “door” is translated from the Greek word “θύρα” or “thyra”. It means a door, vestibule, or entrance. The Codex Sinaiticus translates the phrase “not so much as about the door” as “nor the space about the door”. (Codex Sinaiticus: The H.T. Anderson New Testament, Translated by Henry Tompkins Anderson, Mark, Chapter 2, Verse 2, page 68). The door symbolizes hope, opportunity, passage from one state to another, and initiation. (An Illustrated Encyclopedia of Traditional Symbols, J.C. Cooper, page 54).
- 48 - **preached** – The word “preached” is translated from the Greek word “λαλέω” or “laleō”. It means to utter a voice or emit a sound. It means to speak, utter or talk. The Codex Sinaiticus translated the word “preached” as “spoke”. (Codex Sinaiticus: The H.T. Anderson New Testament, Translated by Henry Tompkins Anderson, Mark, Chapter 2, Verse 2, page 68).

It should be noted that Jesus’ miracles were never done for the purpose of fanfare and fame. Most miracles were preceded by the teaching of eternal doctrines. They were performed to strengthen faith, not establish it. **“Jesus always, continuously, repeatedly, everlastingly, preached the word of salvation – not just ethical principles, but the plan of salvation: faith, repentance, baptism, the gift of the Holy Ghost, and enduring in righteousness to the end.”** (The Doctrinal New Testament Commentary - The Gospels, Volume 1, Bruce R. McConkie, page 179). To this end, Jesus came to earth: to teach salvation and then perform the great sacrifice necessary for us all to obtain it. Jesus is salvation.

- 49 - **the word** – The word “word” is translated from the Greek word “λόγος” or “logos”. It means of speech, a word, a saying or decree. The word symbolizes the sacred sound or utterance. (An Illustrated Encyclopedia of Traditional Symbols, J.C. Cooper, page 194). The word represents truth. Jesus represents all truth. John the revelator, speaking of Jesus, wrote, **“In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The same was in the beginning with God. All things were made by him; and without him was not any thing made that was made.”** (John 1:1-3).

When Jesus teaches the word, we can say with confidence that He is teaching of the salvation that is only achieved through Him. We assume that **“Jesus is seated, as the custom is, and is teaching his hearers.”** (The Mortal Messiah: Volume 2, Collector’s Edition, Bruce R. McConkie, page 31). Rabbinical tradition dictated that scriptures were read standing, while teaching was done in a sitting position. Even so, what Jesus taught was not the typical words of the Pharisees and scribes. The Jews were in a state of apostasy and had lost many of the plain and precious truths of the Gospel. Jesus taught pure doctrine. Much of which seemed new to the hearers, though they must have felt like His words were familiar. The doctrine would have seemed familiar because the spirit of God would have testified of the truth causing their spirits to stir within them a recollection from before mortality. Jesus **“is preaching the everlasting word, the word of truth and salvation, the word of the gospel. Such is the course he will follow everywhere.”** (The Mortal Messiah: Volume 2, Collector’s Edition, Bruce R. McConkie, page 31).

- 50 - **bringing** – The word “bringing” is translated from the Greek word “φέρω” or “pherō”. It means to carry, to carry some burden, or to move by bearing. The word bringing of **“brought”** is a **“favorite word in Matthew, who uses it, in all, fifteen times.”** (Matthew: A New translation with Introduction and Commentary, The Anchor Yale Bible, W.F. Albright and C.S. Mann, page 394).

The friends of the paralytic brought their friend to Jesus that he might be healed by the Master. Likewise, we are commissioned to bring our friends to Jesus so that they might be healed spiritually and physically. This commission is taken upon every person who enters the waters of baptism. The commission is one of covenant.

- 51 - **borne** – The word “borne” is translated from the Greek word “αἴρω” or “airō”. It means to raise up, elevate or lift up. We live in world that is very judgmental and critical of each other. People often elevate themselves but tearing others down. This is not the Lord’s way. The Lord would have us humble ourselves and elevate others. We should remember the Lord’s doctrine that he who wishes to be the greatest must learn to be the least. This is the doctrine of the ministry. **“Hilary of Poitiers (circa AD 315-367) suggests that the four friends were ‘ministering angles’, per se. This brings to mind President Spencer W. Kimball’s oft-quoted remarks, ‘God does notice us, and he watches over us. But it is usually through another mortal that he meets our needs. Therefore, it is vital that we serve each other in the kingdom.’”** (Miracles of the New Testament: A Guide to the Symbolic Messages, Alonzo L. Gaskill, page 75). We become great in the kingdom of God when we bear each others burdens.



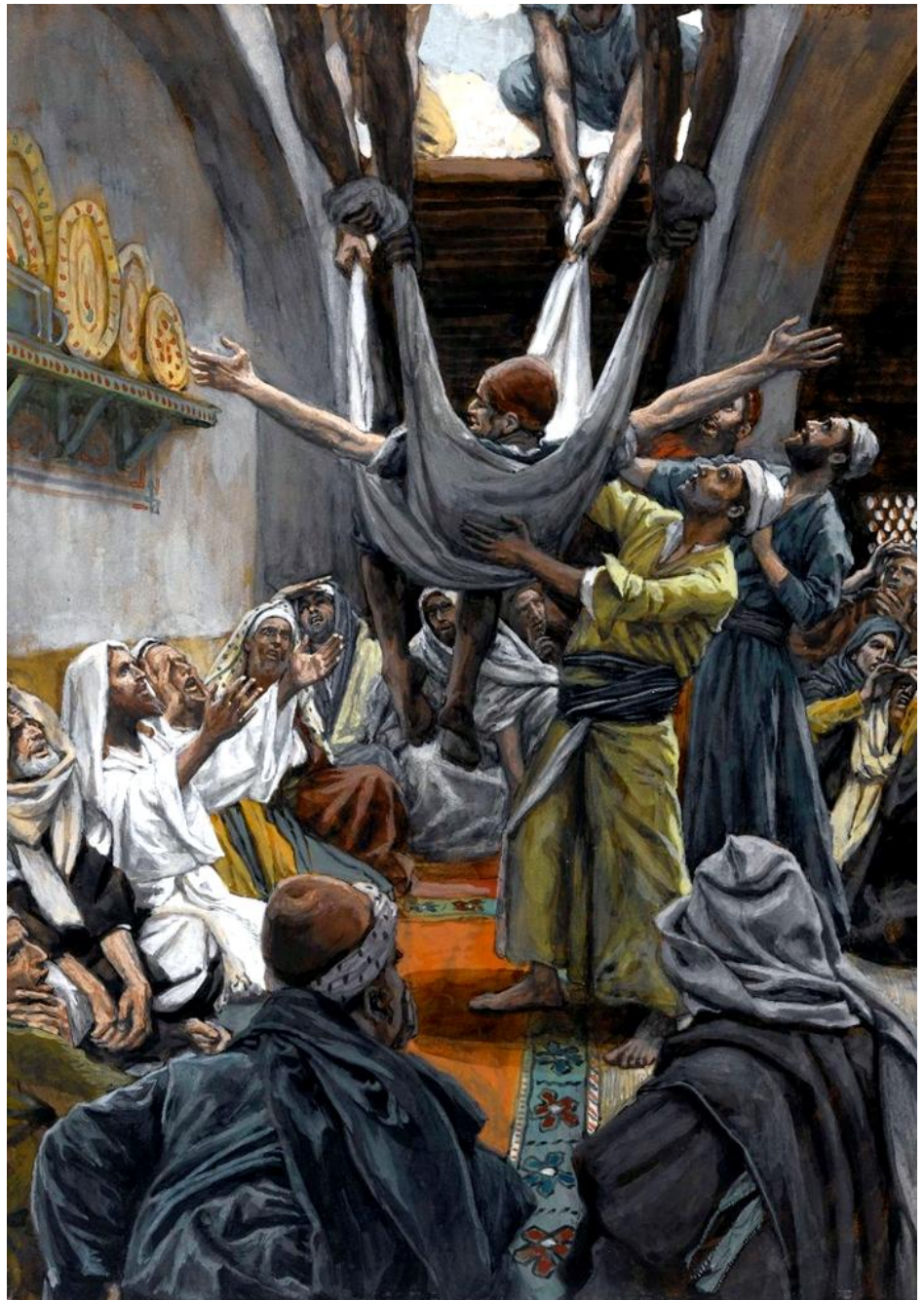
**52 - four** – The word “four” is translated from the Greek word “τέσσαρες” or “tessares”. It means the number four. The number “4” symbolizes the square, the earth, as in the four cardinal directions, four elements and four seasons. It also represents measuring and intelligence. (An Illustrated Encyclopedia of Traditional Symbols, J.C. Cooper, page 116). The number “4” symbolizes boundaries, completeness, and wholeness. (Encyclopedia of Traditional Jewish Symbols, Ellen Frankel and Betsy Platkin Teutsch, page 59). **“Four is the standard scriptural number for ‘geographic fullness or totality’ the implication could be that this is everyone’s story. To one degree or another, spiritual paralysis affects every soul who graces this earth. Similarly Christ’s healing power is also offered to any and all who seek His aid and forgiveness.”** (Miracles of the New Testament: A Guide to the Symbolic Messages, Alonzo L. Gaskill, page 73).

**53 - not come nigh** – The phrase “come nigh” is translated from the Greek word “προσεγγίζω” or “proseggizō”. It means to approach unto. The Codex Sinaiticus translated the phrase “not come nigh unto him” as “not being able to bring him near to him”. (Codex Sinaiticus: The H.T. Anderson New Testament, Translated by Henry Tompkins Anderson, Mark, Chapter 2, Verse 4, page 68).

**54 - unto him** – The phrase “unto him” is translated from the Greek word “αὐτόν” or “autos”. It means himself, herself, themselves, itself, he, she, it or the same.

All human beings must come unto Jesus to overcome the consequences of mortality. We are all subject to the effect of the fall of Adam. We all die and cannot overcome the grave without the atonement of Jesus. Likewise, we are all imperfect and are subject to the consequences of our sins. The ultimate consequence thereof being an eternal separation from God. It meant that there could be no returning to our Father in Heaven without the atonement of Jesus. The fact is, all must come unto Jesus to overcome sin or spiritual death.

Our mortal probation is difficult, by design. It is not designed to make us sorrowful, but it is designed to teach and develop our very souls. This process is often very challenging, and requires the help of heaven. Such help is most often sent in the form of other mortals passing through the same mortal experience. **“One of the characters in this account is a man with palsy, someone who was not able to move without assistance. This man could only stay home, waiting for rescue. In our day, it might happen like this. Four people were fulfilling an assignment from their bishop to visit, at his home, a man who was sick with palsy. I can visualize one of them coming from the Relief Society, one from the elders quorum, one from the Aaronic Priesthood, and, last but not least, one full-time missionary. In the most recent ward council, after counseling together about the needs in the ward, the bishop had given out “rescuing” assignments. These four were assigned to help this man suffering with palsy. They could not wait for him to come to church by himself. They had to go to his home and visit him. They had to seek him out, and so they went. The man was being brought to Jesus.”** (General Conference, “Rescue in Unity”, Elder Chi Hong (Sam) Wong, October 2014). There is a message in this miracle, and that is the Lord expects us to be His hands in bringing other to Him. We need to seek out the spiritually and physically ill. We need to bring them to Jesus so that they might be healed.



**55 - press** – The word “press” is translated from the Greek word “ὄχλος” or “ochlos”. It means a crowd, multitude, or collection of people. It is often used to refer to groups of common people in contrast to rulers or leading men. The Codex Sinaiticus translates the phrase “for the press” as “on account of the multitude”. (Codex Sinaiticus: The H.T. Anderson New Testament, Translated by Henry Tompkins Anderson, Mark, Chapter 2, Verse 4, page 68).

It is clear that the crowd was anxious to get close to Jesus. They crowded the house and surrounding area so that people could not make their way through the crowd. The man with palsy had no way to get to Jesus on his own, but with the crowd it was impossible. His four able bodied friends found it unfeasible to get the paralytic to Jesus. So they resorted to desperate measures and lowered their friend in through the roof. **“Guests were no doubt surprised by this act and likely shocked by the boldness and social impropriety of the four friends, interrupting the discourse of such a noted teacher. But Jesus did not take offense.”** (Miracles of the New Testament: A Guide to the Symbolic Messages, Alonzo L. Gaskill, page 72). Jesus did not focus on the torn roof, but the great faith of the friends and the paralytic.

**56 - uncovered** – The word “uncovered” is translated from the Greek word “ἀποστεγάζω” or “apostegazō”. It means to uncover or take off the roof. The Codex Sinaiticus translates the uncovered” as “take off”. (Codex Sinaiticus: The H.T. Anderson New Testament, Translated by Henry Tompkins Anderson, Mark, Chapter 2, Verse 4, page 68). Uncovering is also used to symbolize the revealing of sins. Without Jesus, sin is an impossible barrier. The friends act as Jesus, removing the barrier to the paralytic man. **“The removal of the**



roof (by the four friends) has been interpreted as a symbol for the reality that we should be willing to do anything necessary to save a soul.” (Miracles of the New Testament: A Guide to the Symbolic Messages, Alonzo L. Gaskill, page 74).

- 57 - **the roof** – The word “roof” is translated from the Greek word “στέγη” or “stegē”. It means the roof a house. The roof symbolizes shelter, and protection. (An Illustrated Encyclopedia of Traditional Symbols, J.C. Cooper, page 140).

Palestinian roofs at the time of Jesus were quite different from modern roofs. They were far less substantial, and required regular maintenance. A typical roof was comprised of wooden beams supporting layers of dried thatch. The thatch was then covered by a layer of clay. Though it sounds fragile, the method did lend itself to a create a strong and sturdy roof. At the same time, the Palestinian roofs could be dug through and a hole could be readily made. Roofs were sturdy enough to support activity on the roof. During the heat of the summer, a family would often sleep on the roof to enjoy the evening and nighttime breeze. The roof often served as a place to perform other household activities. This custom led to a common practice of building stairs outside of Palestinian homes, or out in the courtyard, to access the roof. In regards to the account of the Paralytic, **“Some suppose that they carried him up by the stairs which led from the court; but, if the house was so crowded as to leave no room even at the door, it is hard to tell how they could get him through the porch into the court, and thence to the stairs. If the house was joined to others in the same street, they might have taken him through the adjoining building, and lifted him over the parapet which divided the roofs of the two houses, and thus have placed him on the roof of the house where Jesus was teaching; or there may have been a flight of external stairs by which they could ascend from the street to the roof.”** (Manners and Customs of the Bible, James M. Freeman, pages 398).

Another piece of information that may have some bearing on the account of the healing of the paralytic was the fact that the Jews of the time commonly build their homes right up against the neighbor’s home. One could literally walk from roof to roof. The Rabbis called this phenomenon as the “road of roofs”. This would lend itself to accessing someone’s roof from several homes away. Edersheim writes, **“They may have ascended it in this wise, or else reached it by what the Rabbis called ‘the road of the roofs,’ passing from roof to roof, if the house adjoined others in the same street. The roof itself, which had hard beaten earth or rubble underneath it, was paved with brick, stone, or any other hard substance, and surrounded by a balustrade which, according to Jewish Law, was at least three feet high.”** (The Life and Times of Jesus the Messiah, Volume 1, Alfred Edersheim, page 503).



- 58 - **broken it up** – The phrase “broken it up” is translated from the Greek word “ἐξορύσσω” or “exoryssō”. It means to dig out, to pluck out, or to dig through. The Codex Sinaiticus translated the phrase “broken it up” as “digging through”. (Codex Sinaiticus: The H.T. Anderson New Testament, Translated by Henry Tompkins Anderson, Mark, Chapter 2, Verse 4, page 68).

**“It is scarcely possible to imagine, that the bearers of the paralytic would have attempted to dig through this into a room below, not to speak of the interruption and inconvenience caused to those below by such an operation.”** (The Life and Times of Jesus the Messiah, Volume 1, Alfred Edersheim, page 503). The act of digging through the roof was undoubtedly socially unacceptable. **“But we can imagine the arresting of the discourse of Jesus, and the breathless surprise of the crowd as this opening through the tiles appeared, and slowly a pallet was let down before them. Busy hands would help to steady it, and bring it safe to the ground.”** (The Life and Times of Jesus the Messiah, Volume 1, Alfred Edersheim, page 503). Such should be our attitude towards coming unto Jesus. There should be no barrier not worth traversing, no mountain not worth climbing, and any challenge not worth enduring in order to reach Him. The friends had broken through the roof by digging through the clay on the top the roof, removing the thatch, and clearing a sizable hole for their paralytic friend to be lowered through.

- 59 - **let down** – The phrase “let down” is translated from the Greek word “χαλάω” or “chalaō”. It means to loosen, slacken, relax or to let down from a higher place to a lower.

Most artistic renderings of the healing of the paralytic show the friends employing rope to lower their friend through the roof. Unfortunately, the record lacks any clarity as to how the man was lowered, only that he was let down.

The paralytic man was undoubtedly at a spiritual low. It is perfectly symbolized by his lowly physical state. Unable to lift himself out of his state, he depended on friends who stood on a higher state to elevate him. **“The fact that the friends had to climb up to the roof and haul their associate up reminds us that saving a spiritually sick brother or sister may require that we elevate our own lives as we seek to elevate our struggling friend. The miracle certainly suggests that as we elevate the one who is sick, we by default find ourselves elevated. This truth is so evident in temple work: we attend to save the dead but in the process find ourselves elevated spiritually”** (Miracles of the New Testament: A Guide to the Symbolic Messages, Alonzo L. Gaskill, page 75).

- 60 - **lay** – The word “lay” is translated from the Greek word “κατάκειμαι” or “katakeimai”. It means to have lain down (i.e. to lie prostrate).
- 61 - **sitting** – The word “sitting” is translated from the Greek word “κάθημαι” or “kathēmai”. It means to sit down, to seat one’s self, to have a fixed abode, or to dwell.
- 62 - **reasoning** – The word “reasoning” is translated from the Greek word “διαλογίζομαι” or “dialogizomai”. It means to bring together different reasons, to reckon up the reasons, to reason, revolve in one’s mind, deliberate.

Reasoning is the action of thinking about something in a logical, sensible way. Unfortunately, our reasoning is based on our own knowledge and experience. In the grand scheme of things, our reasoning is limited and often flawed. Humble men turn to God for guidance and direction, thus expanding their ability to reason. The Pharisees and scribes were



prideful and apostate. They lacked a spiritual connection with heaven, and therefore their reasoning lied solely upon their own ability. Their reasoning was quite often flawed. In this case, they could not understand the priesthood that Jesus held, nor in fact, who He was. They could not reason that a man could forgive sins, and likewise that disease could be healed. Wrongly, the scribes and Pharisees believed that disease was a consequence for sin. **“Jesus’ comparison implies that the scribes and Pharisees would consider it easier to declare the forgiveness of sins, because they could not tell whether the effect to declare the forgiveness of sins, because they could not tell whether the effect has been achieved or not, than to heal the paralyzed man, which could be directly verified.”** (The Gospel according to Luke I-IX: A New translation with Introduction and Commentary, The Anchor Yale Bible, Joseph A. Fitzmyer, page 584).

**63 - God only** – The word “only” is translated from the Greek word “εἷς” or “heis”. It means one.

The Jews rightfully believed that there was only one true and living God. Though, they regularly fell prey to worshipping the false Idols of their neighbors, their religion consistently taught that the true God is Jehovah. They believed Him to be all powerful. He is omnipresent and omnipotent. **“For, with God there is neither past nor future; neither immediate nor mediate; but all is one, the eternally and God- pervaded Present.”** (The Life and Times of Jesus the Messiah, Volume 1, Alfred Edersheim, page 505).

The apostate scribes and Pharisees, at the time of Jesus, did not properly understand the Godhead. They did not understand that the Jesus who stood before them was indeed the Son of God. He was in fact, the God Jehovah and His Father was the Great Elohim.

**64 - immediately** – The word “immediately” is translated from the Greek word “εὐθέως” or “eutheōs”. It means straightway, immediately, or forthwith. The Lord’s ability to discern the thoughts of man was not burdened by delay. He knew and understood the thoughts and hearts of all those around Him. Jesus was so righteous that the gifts of the spirit were totally and fully unlocked to Him. **“The discernment of spirits and the power to understand and clearly comprehend the revelations of the Lord will be given him. What a glorious privilege this is to be guided constantly by the Holy Ghost and to have mysteries of the kingdom of God made manifest.”** (Answers to Gospel Question, Joseph Fielding Smith, Book 4, Section 17, page 90).

**65 - perceived** – The word “perceived” is translated from the Greek word “ἐπιγινώσκω” or “epiginōskō”. It means to become thoroughly acquainted with, to know thoroughly, or to perceive. In the case of Jesus, I believe the translation should properly be “knew thoroughly” rather than “perceived”.

**66 - in his spirit** – The word “spirit” is translated from the Greek word “πνεῦμα” or “pneuma”. It is used in reference to the third member of the Godhead; the Holy Ghost.

**67 - reasoned** – The word “reasoned” is translated from the Greek word “διαλογίζομαι” or “dialogizomai”. It means to bring together different reasons, to reckon up the reasons, to reason, revolve in one’s mind, or deliberate.

The Jews believed that God forgave sin only after the proper sacrificial offerings had been made according to the prescribed fashion and in accordance with proper priesthood authority. To the Jews, **“Forgiveness of sins is not something that can be seen or felt or tasted by an outside observer.”** (The Mortal Messiah: Volume 2, Collector’s Edition, Bruce R. McConkie, page 32). Once the proper steps were taken, regardless of the heart of the offeror, the priest was authorized to pronounce forgiveness on God’s behalf.

The priests could not tell if the offeror had truly had a change of heart, and therefore they focused on the outward ordinances. As Jesus pronounces forgiveness to the paralytic man, the Jew were perplexed. **“The general impression on our mind is, that this audience was rather in a state of indecision than of sympathy with Jesus.”** (The Life and Times of Jesus the Messiah, Volume 1, Alfred Edersheim, page 501). They reasoned based on their experience, rather than their faith in the Master.

**68 - reason** – The word “reason” is translated from the Greek word “διαλογίζομαι” or “dialogizomai”. It means to bring together different reasons, to reckon up the reasons, to reason, revolve in one’s mind, or deliberate.

Jesus, knowing that the Jews relied on their own reasoning, **“reproved them for their fierce unuttered calumnies of which their hearts were full.”** (The Story of a Beautiful Life: Farrar’s Life of Christ, The New 20th Century Edition, 1900, Canon Farrar, D.D., F.R.S., page 221). In their hearts, they mocked and challenged that which they did not understand.

**69 - these things** – The phrase “these things” is translated from the Greek word “ταῦτα” or “tauta”. It means these.

**70 - bed** – The word “bed” is translated from the Greek word “κράβατος” or “krabattos”. It means a pallet or a camp bed. It is a rather simple bed holding one person. Many visualize the Paralytic’s bed as something like a stretcher. Elder McConkie wrote, **“They are carrying a litter or pallet where on lies one sick of the palsy.”** (The Mortal Messiah: Volume 2, Collector’s Edition, Bruce R. McConkie, page 31).

The sleeping practices of the ancient Jews were far different from ours. Beds were not common, except for among the rich aristocrats. The Jews used their outer cloaks as their nightly bedding. They typically slept on thin bedrolls. **“The ‘bed’ was simply a mat or blanket which could be carried in the hands. The poor sometimes had no other bed than the outer garment. The wealthier people in the East have quilts or mattresses filled with cotton, which are spread on the floor or on the divan. In the text the paralytic, being healed, was told to take up his bed and go home. All he had to do was to roll up his blanket and depart. A similar incident took place at the pool of Bethesda. See John v, 8-12. On such simple ‘beds’ the sick wore easily carried.”** (Manners and Customs of the Bible, James M. Freeman, pages 342-343).



71 - **go thy way** – The phrase “go thy way” is translated from the Greek word “ὑπάγω” or “hypagō”. It means to lead under, bring under, to withdraw one’s self, to go away, or depart. The Codex Sinaiticus translated the phrase “go thy way into thine house” as “go to thy house”. (Codex Sinaiticus: The H.T. Anderson New Testament, Translated by Henry Tompkins Anderson, Mark, Chapter 2, Verse 11, page 68).

In typical fashion, Jesus did not perform miracles for personal gain or praise. The man was directed to leave and return to his home.

72 - **went forth** – The phrase “went forth” is translated from the Greek word “ἐξέρχομαι” or “exerchomai”. It means to go or come forth of.

73 - **all amazed** – The word “amazed” is translated from the Greek word “ἐξίστημι” or “existēmi”. It means to throw out of position, displace, to amaze, to astonish, or to astounded. The Codex Sinaiticus translates the phrase “they were all amazed” as “they all were astonished”. (Codex Sinaiticus: The H.T. Anderson New Testament, Translated by Henry Tompkins Anderson, Mark, Chapter 2, Verse 12, page 68). **“The ‘they’ must refer to unnamed people; it cannot mean the Pharisees and teachers.”** (The Gospel according to Luke I-IX: A New translation with Introduction and Commentary, The Anchor Yale Bible, Joseph A. Fitzmyer, page 582). The unbelievers must have reasoned that Jesus’ work was some sort of trick or deception. Those who were humble, were amazed.

74 - **we never saw** – The word “never” is translated from the Greek word “οὐδέποτε oudepote”. It means never.

75 - **fashion** – The phrase “it on this fashion” is translated from the Greek word “οὕτω(ς)” or “houtō(s)”. It means in this manner, thus, or so. The Codex Sinaiticus translates the phrase “We never saw it on this fashion” as “Thus never we saw”. (Codex Sinaiticus: The H.T. Anderson New Testament, Translated by Henry Tompkins Anderson, Mark, Chapter 2, Verse 2, page 68). **“It is amazing that all these could be gathered in one place and have different responses to the same miracle.”** (Miracles of the New Testament: A Guide to the Symbolic Messages, Alonzo L. Gaskill, page 76).

76 - **And it came to pass** – The phrase “it came to pass” is translated from the Greek word “γίνομαι” or “ginomai”. It means to become, to come into existence, begin to be, to appear in history, to be made, or finished.

77 - **teaching** – The word “teaching” is translated from the Greek word “διδάσκω” or “didaskō”. It means to teach or hold a discourse with others in order to instruct them. It means to deliver a didactic discourse. **“We can picture to ourselves the Savior ‘speaking the Word’ to that eager, interested crowd, which would soon become forgetful even of the presence of the watchful ‘Scribes.’**” (The Life and Times of Jesus the Messiah, Volume 1, Alfred Edersheim, page 501). It is an interesting note, that Jesus is typically teaching prior to or after He performs a miracle. The teaching is the primary function, whereas the miracle serves to support the faith that is manifest in the teaching. Miracles never produce faith. Quite the contrary, faith always proceeds the miracle.

78 - **Pharisees** – The word “Pharisees” is translated from the Greek word “Φαρισαῖος” or “Pharisaios”. It is a transliteration of the Hebrew word “פְּרִישֵׁי” or “Parashe” meaning to separate or distinguish. **“According to Josephus (Ant. 18.1, 2 § 11), the Pharisees were one of the three ‘philosophies’ among the Palestinian Jews of his day; sometimes he calls them ‘sects’ (haireisies, Ant. 13.5, 9 § 171; cf, Acts 15:5). Their origin is to be traced to non-priestly interpreters of the Torah in the postexilic period; but they seem to have first emerged as an organized group in the Maccabean period, perhaps shortly before the time of John Hycanus. The Greek name *Pharisaioi* is probably a transcription of Aramaic *Perisaye*, ‘Separated Ones’, undoubtedly used of them by others who differed with them.”** (The Gospel according to Luke I-IX: A New translation with Introduction and Commentary, The Anchor Yale Bible, Joseph A. Fitzmyer, pages 580-581).

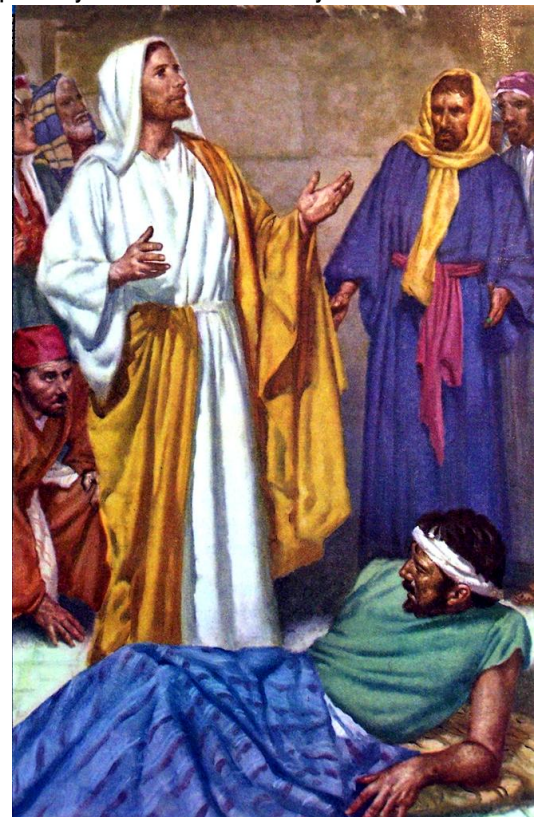
The Pharisees started as a reformation movement around 200 BCE. They were originally well educated students of the Law. They saw that the aristocrats who ran the temple, and the Jewish government, had become corrupt and apostate. They “separated” themselves from the mainstream Jews, and tried to purify the Jewish way of life by returning to what they believed was true doctrine.

Since the Jews, at the time the Pharisees were formed, were apostate many of the plain and precious truths of the religion had been lost. The Pharisees were wise enough to see that their religion had gone astray. Consequently, the Pharisees turned to oral interpretation of the law to restore lost truths. **“They advocated a rigorous interpretation of the Mosaic Law, insisting not only on the observance of the written Torah, but also of the oral Torah.”** (The Gospel according to Luke I-IX: A New translation with Introduction and Commentary, The Anchor Yale Bible, Joseph A. Fitzmyer, page 581). Unfortunately, the Pharisees did not turn to the Lord for a restoration of the truth, but rather they tried to restore in according to the dictates of their own imagination. The creation of oral law became a foundation of the Pharisees. **“These ‘Sayings of the Fathers’ were intended to be a ‘fence for the Law’, guarding it against violation.”** (The Gospel according to Luke I-IX: A New translation with Introduction and Commentary, The Anchor Yale Bible, Joseph A. Fitzmyer, page 581).

The Pharisees were educated with the ways of the world. **“Influenced by Hellenistic ideas of the value of *paideia*, these interpreters regarded knowledge of the Torah and its prescriptions and prohibitions as the mark and guarantee of piety.”** (The Gospel according to Luke I-IX: A New translation with Introduction and Commentary, The Anchor Yale Bible, Joseph A. Fitzmyer, page 581). They became fanatical in their attention to the outward ordinances. **“Meticulous observance of the Sabbath and feast days, of ritual purity regulations, of tithing, of dietary rules was their practice; their tenets numbered belief in human freedom under the control of providence, bodily resurrection, angels, the coming of a Messiah and the ingathering of Israel and its tribes at the end of time.”** (The Gospel according to Luke I-IX: A New translation with Introduction and Commentary, The Anchor Yale Bible, Joseph A. Fitzmyer, page 581).

By the time of Jesus, the aristocrats were known as Sadducees. The Pharisees were no more right than the Sadducees. They just had different flaws. Both sects had scribes. Scribes are also referred to as “lawyers” and “doctors” of the law. They were the individuals who made a profession of interpreting and studying the law. **“The scribes were the experts in the law who knew all these rules and regulations, and who deduced them from the law... Note two things. First, for the scribes and Pharisees these rules were a matter of life and death; to break one of them was deadly sin. Second, only people desperately in earnest would ever have tried to keep them, for they must have made life supremely uncomfortable. It was only the best people who would even make the attempt.”** (The Gospel of Luke, The Daily Study Bible Series - Revised Edition, William Barclay, pages 60-61).

The three mainstream Jewish sects at the time of Jesus can be summarized as follows:





# Comparing the Jewish Sects at the Time of Jesus

	<b>Sadducees</b>	<b>Pharisees</b>	<b>Essenes</b>
<b>Origins</b>	Descended from Solomon's High Priest, "Zadok". Officially a sect in approximately 200BCE	Descended from Hasidim freedom fighters of the Maccabees' era.	Off shoot of the Pharisees, resisted the Maccabees claim to the High Priesthood in 170BCE
<b>General</b>	In the World, and of the World	In the world, but not of the world	Neither in the world, or of the world
<b>Membership</b>	Few	6,000	4,000
<b>Baptism</b>	Required for converts	Required for converts	Required for all men
<b>Resurrection</b>	None	Physical	Spiritual only
<b>Marriage</b>	Practiced	Practiced	Not condemned, but Avoided
<b>Spirit world / Angels</b>	Rejected	Accepted	Accepted
<b>Fate</b>	Rejected, in favor of Agency	Accepted in combination with Agency	Accepted
<b>Oral Law</b>	Rejected	Accepted	Selective and secretive
<b>Wealth</b>	Rich Aristocrats, favored rich	Layman, favored rich	Communal ownership, humble
<b>Holiness</b>	Only exist in Temple	Holiness Exists outside of Temple	Holiness exists through Purity
<b>Occupation</b>	Priest, Officials & Jewish Leaders	Synagogue Teacher & Ordinary Jews with ordinary professions	Brotherhood of private community, worked in a communal structure
<b>Government</b>	Accepted foreign Rule	Say it as God's Punishment	Opposed foreign Rule
<b>Location</b>	Urban centers	Rural villages and Cities	Isolated Communities
<b>Interpretation of the Law</b>	Pragmatic and Accommodating	Accurate and Precise	Creative and Adaptive
<b>Gentiles</b>	Openly Accepted	Partially Accepted	Mostly Rejected
<b>Rights based on</b>	Hereditary, proven by Genealogy	Scholastic, Knowledge of Law	Purity, Cleanliness
<b>Assoc. Rabbi School</b>	Shammai	Hillel	Unknown
<b>View of Jesus</b>	Rejected	Rejected	Unknown
<b>Main Control</b>	Temple	Synagogues	Private Community
<b>Miracles</b>	Rejected	Accepted	Accepted

- 79 - doctors of the law** – The phrase “doctors of the law” is translated from the Greek word “νομοδιδάσκαλος” or “nomodidaskalos”. It means a teacher and interpreter of the law; among the Jews. Fitzmyer translates “doctors of the law” as **“teachers of the Law. The term *nomodidaskaloi* occurs only here in the gospel tradition.”** (The Gospel according to Luke I-IX: A New translation with Introduction and Commentary, The Anchor Yale Bible, Joseph A. Fitzmyer, page 581). Most scholars feel that scribes were an occupation that spanned the various sects. Fitzmyer attaches them specifically to the Pharisees. He wrote, **“They are probably to be understood as a specific group within the Pharisees and probably are the same as the scribes of v. 21, leaders of the Pharisaic group, the ‘rabbis’ of later tradition.”** (The Gospel according to Luke I-IX: A New translation with Introduction and Commentary, The Anchor Yale Bible, Joseph A. Fitzmyer, page 581).

The scribes were responsible for the interpretation of the Law and consequently they were employed by the rulers of the Jews to assess the validity of things with respect to the Law. John the Baptist had drawn enough attention that the scribes and assigned leaders were dispatched to evaluate him and his work. Not surprising, Jesus experience the same scrutiny on a regular basis. **“Jesus, as we have seen, had already attracted the crowds. Because of that he had attracted the notice of the official leaders of the Jews. The Sanhedrin was their supreme court. One of its great functions was to be the guardian of orthodoxy. For instance, it was the Sanhedrin's duty to deal with any man who was a false prophet. It seems that it had sent out a kind of scouting party to check up on Jesus; and they were there in Capernaum. No doubt they had annexed an honourable place in the front of the crowd and were sitting there critically watching everything that was going on.”** (The Gospel of Mark, The Daily Study Bible Series - Revised Edition, William Barclay, page 49)

- 80 - out of every town** – The word “town” is translated from the Greek word “κώμη” or “kōmē”. It means the common sleeping place to which laborers in the field return; a village.

The Jews had a grand governing council called the “Great Sanhedrin”. Additionally, each town, of any reasonable size, established their own Sanhedrin. The local Sanhedrin served as lesser courts typically addressing local matters of minor significance to the state as a whole. Under Roman rule, they were limited in power and authority, but did oversee most religious matters.

By the time that Jesus healed the paralytic in this chapter, He had visited cities and villages throughout Galilee and Judea. It would appear that many of the local Sanhedrin had taken interest in Him. At the miracle associated with the Paralytic, **“these occupied the ‘uppermost rooms’, sitting, no doubt, near to Jesus. Their influence must have been felt by the people. Although irresistibly attracted by Jesus, an element of curiosity, if not of doubt, would mingle with their feelings, as they looked at their leaders, to whom long habit attached the most superstitious veneration.”** (The Life and Times of Jesus the Messiah, Volume 1, Alfred Edersheim, page 501).

- 81 - Galilee** – The word “Galilee” is translated from the Greek word “Γαλιλαία” or “Galilaia”. Translated literally it means “Circuit”. Galilee is in northern Palestine, between the Litani River in modern-day Lebanon and the Jezreel Valley of modern-day Israel. Galilee is commonly divided into three parts: upper Galilee with heavy rains and high peaks, lower Galilee with milder weather, and the Sea of Galilee.

The bulk of Jesus' ministry takes place in Galilee. Unlike Judea, Galilee was home to a more humble population. Speaking very general, they were farmers and fishermen. At the same time, Galilee was so fruitful that it fed most of Palestine.

- 82 - Judæa** – The word “Judæa” is translated from the Greek word “Ιουδαία” or “Ioudaia”. Translated literally it means “he shall be praised”.

Judea is a mountainous region, part of which is considered a desert. It varies greatly in height, rising to an altitude of 3,346 feet in the south at Mount Hebron, 19 miles southwest of Jerusalem, and descending to as much as 1,312 feet below sea level in the east of the region. It also varies in rainfall, starting with about 16 to 20 inches in the western hills, rising to 24 inches around western Jerusalem (in central Judea), falling back to 16 inches in eastern Jerusalem and dropping to around 3.94 inches in the eastern parts, due to a rain shadow effect (this is the Judean desert). The climate, accordingly, moves between Mediterranean in the west and desert climate in the east, with a strip of steppe climate in the middle. Major urban areas in the region include Jerusalem, Bethlehem, Gush Etzion, Jericho and Hebron.

Geographers divide Judea into several regions: the Hebron hills, the Jerusalem saddle, the Bethel hills and the Judean desert east of Jerusalem, which descends in a series of steps to the Dead Sea. The hills are distinct for their anticline structure. In ancient times the hills were forested, and the Bible records agriculture and sheep farming being practiced in the area. Animals are still grazed today, with shepherds moving them between the low ground to the hilltops as summer approaches, while the slopes are still layered with centuries-old stone terracing. The Jewish Revolt against the Romans ended in the devastation of vast areas of the Judæan countryside.

- 83 - Jerusalem** – The word “Jerusalem” is translated from the Greek word “Ιερουσαλήμ” or “Ierousalēm”. Translated literally it means “set ye double peace”.

Jerusalem is not only the capital of ancient Israel, it is home to the House of the Lord. The Jews considered it the center of the Universe and the Home of Deity. It is the Holy city. The Great Sanhedrin was located in Jerusalem, and consequently the governing body of all of Judaism is centered in Jerusalem

- 84 - the Lord** – The word “Lord” is translated from the Greek word “κύριος” or “kyrios”. It means he to whom a person or thing belongs, about which he has power of deciding; Master or Lord. It is a title of honor expressive of respect and reverence, with which servants greet their master. **“Here Kyrios is clearly distinguished from Jesus and means Yahweh.”** (The Gospel according to Luke I-IX: A New translation with Introduction and Commentary, The Anchor Yale Bible, Joseph A. Fitzmyer, page 582).

- 85 - present** – The word “present” is translated from the Greek word “εἰς” or “eis”. It means into, unto, to, towards, for, or among.





**86 - to heal them** – The word “heal” is translated from the Greek word “ἰάομαι” or “iaomai”. It means to cure, heal or to make whole.

We marvel at the healings performed by Jesus. Yet, **“administering to the sick has been an ordinance of the gospel practiced from the beginning when the authority of the priesthood has been founded on the earth.”** (Answers to Gospel Question, Joseph Fielding Smith, Book 1, Section 37, page 145). The reason we marvel at Jesus’ miracles are the magnitude, frequency and confidence by which Jesus performed such miracles. What we fail to see is that all priesthood holders are entitled to perform such work if they will but live worthy of the privilege. Jesus lived a perfect life, and therefore could bring down the powers of heaven without restraint.

We should focus on the attributes necessary to perform the works of Jesus. **“One interpreter of the miracle suggests that the four friends were good symbols of the attributes we need to develop if we are to be a blessing and aid to those sickened by sin:**

- (1) a consecrated life,
- (2) compassionate love,
- (3) a propensity to intercession, and
- (4) undaunted faith.”

(Miracles of the New Testament: A Guide to the Symbolic Messages, Alonzo L. Gaskill, page 74).

**87 - taken with a palsy** – The phrase “taken with a palsy” is translated from the Greek word “παρὰλύω” or “paralyō”. It means paralyzed. The Codex Sinaiticus translated the phrase “taken with a palsy” as “who was a paralytic”. (Codex Sinaiticus: The H.T. Anderson New Testament, Translated by Henry Tompkins Anderson, Luke, Chapter 5, Verse 18, page 112). Fitzmyer says that “taken with a palsy” is **“Literally ‘a human being who was paralyzed’. Whereas the other evangelists use *paralytikos*, ‘a paralytic’, Luke prefers the pf. Pass. Ptc. *Paralelymenos*, which better expresses the condition of the man.”** (The Gospel according to Luke I-IX: A New translation with Introduction and Commentary, The Anchor Yale Bible, Joseph A. Fitzmyer, page 582). The palsy, as applied to the man in this chapter, is **“a species of paralysis which deprived the subject of the power of voluntary motion and usually of speech; the man was helpless.”** (Jesus the Christ, James E. Talmage, page 154).

The previous chapter claims that leprosy is a symbol for sin. In this chapter, we find that paralysis is also a symbol of sin. **“The symbol is a bit like that of leprosy. However, whereas leprosy represents sinners slowly dying from their sins, paralysis suggesting that sins prevent them from being spiritually active.”** (Miracles of the New Testament: A Guide to the Symbolic Messages, Alonzo L. Gaskill, page 74).

**88 - sought means** – The word “sought” is translated from the Greek word “ζητέω” or “zēteō”. It means to loose on one side or from the side, dissolve, weaken, enfeeble, or suffering from the relaxing of the nerves. The word “means” is translated from the Greek word “εἰσφέρειω” or “eispherō”. It means to bring into, or to lead into. The phrase they sought means to bring him in” as “they sought to bring him in”. (Codex Sinaiticus: The H.T. Anderson New Testament, Translated by Henry Tompkins Anderson, Luke, Chapter 5, Verse 18, page 112).

**89 - bring him in** – The four friends of the paralytic brought their incapacitated friend to Jesus so that He could be healed physically and spiritually. What they may or may not have realized is the effect that this would have on their own souls. **“When we throw ourselves wholeheartedly into the service of God and service to his children, our sins are taken away.”** (The Four Gospels - Verse by verse, D. Kelly Ogden and Andrew C. Skinner, page 247). There was more than one man healed that day.

**90 - lay him before him** – The word “lay” is translated from the Greek word “τίθημι” or “tithēmi”. It means to set, put, place or lay.

**91 - they could not** – The phrase “when they could” is translated from the Greek word “εὐρίσκω” or “heuriskō”. It means to come upon, hit upon or meet with. It also means to find by inquiry, thought, examination, scrutiny, observation or to find out by practice and experience.

Jacob, the Book of Mormon prophet, taught that there **“must needs be, that there is an opposition in all things.”** (2<sup>nd</sup> Nephi 2:11). It seems like all our good intentions and desires are met with resistance. The four friends of the paralytic had great intentions. They would bring their incapable friend to Jesus. Imagine their surprise as they carried him only to find that **“the room was too crowded. They could not get in through the door. I am sure they tried everything they could think of, but they just could not get through. Things did not happen as smoothly as planned. There were obstacles along their way of ‘rescue.’ But they did not give up. They did not leave the man with palsy by the door. They counseled together on what to do next—how they could bring the man unto Jesus Christ for healing. The work to assist Jesus Christ in saving souls, at least for them, was never too demanding. They came up with a plan—not an easy one, but they acted on it.”** (General Conference, “Rescue in Unity”, Elder Chi Hong (Sam) Wong, October 2014). When we find opposition to doing good we must not get discouragement. Our resolved to do what is right is a manifestation of our faith.

**92 - find by what way** – The word “what” is translated from the Greek word “ποῖος” or “poios”. It means of what sort or nature.

**93 - the multitude** – The word “multitude” is translated from the Greek word “ὄχλος” or “ochlos”. It means a crowd; a casual collection of people. It is a group of common or ordinary people; as opposed to rulers and leaders. It is estimated that 200 people had gathered to listen to Jesus teach.

**94 - housetop** – The word “housetop” is translated from the Greek word “δῶμα” or “dōma”. It means a building or a house. It can also be used for a housetop or a roof. The housetops of the Orientals were, and still are, level and frequented not only for walking, but also for meditation and prayer.

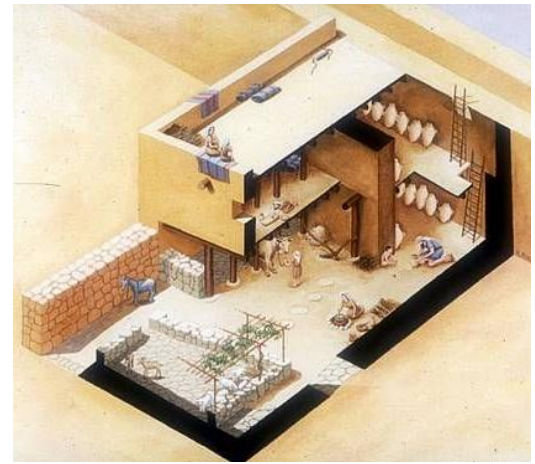
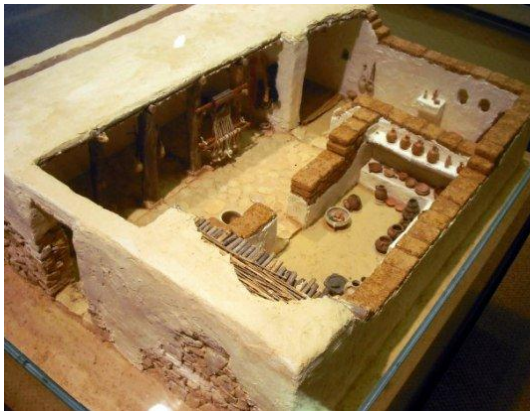
The housetops of the ancient Jews serve as much more than a protective cover for the house. In the summer it served as sleeping quarters. It also served as a work area and place of family gathering. It required regular maintenance and repair. New clay was added on a regular basis and compacted to seal the roof. Jewish law required that the roofs contained a parapet wall of at least 2 cubits for safety reasons. Though housetops had some obvious similarities, they were also different from house to house.





The differences in the houses make it difficult to make and accept absolute statements regarding the homes at the time of Jesus. Edersheim, a very respected Biblical Scholar, gives a very nice description of ancient Jewish homes. He wrote, "Looking up and down one of the streets of a town in Galilee or Judaea, the houses would be seen to differ in size and in elegance, from the small cottage, only eight or ten yards square, to the mansions of the rich, sometimes two or more stories high, and embellished by rows of pillars and architectural adornments. Suppose ourselves in front of a better-class dwelling, though not exactly that of a patrician, for it is built of brick, or perhaps of undressed, or even of dressed stone, but not of marble, nor yet of hewn stone; nor are its walls painted with such delicate colours as vermilion, but simply whitewashed, or, may be, covered with some neutral tint. A wide, sometimes costly, stair leads from the outside straight up to the flat roof, which is made to slope a little downwards, so as to allow the rainwater easily to flow through pipes into the cistern below. The roof is paved with brick, stone, or other hard substance, and surrounded by a balustrade, which, according to Jewish law, must be at least two cubits (three feet) high, and strong enough to bear the weight of a person. Police-regulations, conceived in the same spirit of carefulness, prohibited open wells and pits, insufficient ladders, rickety stairs, even dangerous dogs about a house. From roof to roof there might be a regular communication, called by the Rabbis "the road of the roofs" (Babba Mez. 88 b). Thus a person could make his escape, passing from roof to roof, till at the last house he would descend the stairs that led down its outside, without having entered any dwelling. To this 'road of the roofs' our Lord no doubt referred in His warning to His followers." (Sketches of Jewish Social Life, Alfred Edersheim, page 54).

example of a smaller home at the time of Jesus



example of a larger home at the time of Jesus

we repent, we must overcome the obstacles of mortality and discard the sins that hinder us. Often, we must do that which is uncommon to the carnal men. Symbolically, the friends do this by overcoming the stairs and casting aside the pieces of roofing. "They make an opening in the thatch-type roof, and through it they lower the suffering suppliant into the presence of Jesus." (The Mortal Messiah: Volume 2, Collector's Edition, Bruce R. McConkie, page 31).

Elder Talmage records, "By some means they carried the afflicted man to the flat roof of the house, probably by an outside stairway or by the use of a ladder, possibly by entering an adjoining house, ascending the stairs to its roof and crossing there from to the house within which Jesus was teaching. They broke away part of the roof, making an opening, or enlarging that of the trapdoor such as the houses of that place and time were usually provided with; and, to the surprize of the assembled crowd, they then let down through the tiling the portable couch upon which the palsied sufferer lay." (Jesus the Christ, James E. Talmage, page 154).

One of the aspects of the miracle of the healing of the paralytic that seems to be commonly ignored is the challenge of lifting a paralyzed man up a flight of narrow stairs to a roof top, digging through the roof, and then lowering the same man to the ground from the roof. The task would have been physically taxing and awkward at best. At any point along the way, the four friends might have abandon the task as being too difficult. There had to be an ongoing temptation to give up, and yet unless the task was fully accomplished the outcome could not be realized. "The climbing upon the roof and the removal of its tiles could suggest the innate difficulty of turning one from paths of sin to repentance and righteousness." (Miracles of the New Testament: A Guide to the Symbolic Messages, Alonzo L. Gaskill, page 73). When

we repent, we must overcome the obstacles of mortality and discard the sins that hinder us. Often, we must do that which is uncommon to the carnal men. Symbolically, the friends do this by overcoming the stairs and casting aside the pieces of roofing. "They make an opening in the thatch-type roof, and through it they lower the suffering suppliant into the presence of Jesus." (The Mortal Messiah: Volume 2, Collector's Edition, Bruce R. McConkie, page 31).

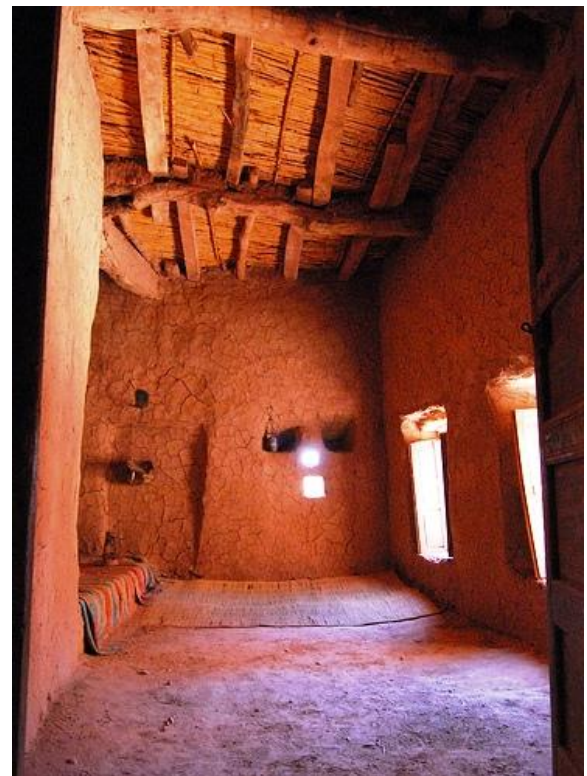
95 - **let him down** – The word "down" is translated from the Greek word "καθίημι" or "kathiēmi". It means to send down or to let down.

The means of lowering the man are not specified. Hands alone could not have lowered the man more than a couple of feet. It is possible that the people below took the man the rest of the way. It is also possible that the creative men used ropes or even their cloaks to assist in lowering the man down to Jesus.

96 - **tiling** – The word "tiling" is translated from the Greek word "κέραμος" or "keramos". It means clay or potter's earth. It is used for anything made of clay or earthen ware. It is also used in reference to roofing tiles and the roof itself. The phrase "through the roof" means through the door in the roof to which a ladder or stairway led up from the street. According to the Rabbis, there are two ways to enter an ancient Jewish home; "the way through the door" and "the way through the roof".

The most common roofs of the time were made of clay. Clay was readily abundant, and free. Many scholars argue that the reference to roofing in this chapter is a Greek word that refers to literal tiles. For example, "Tiling (Greek, keramos; Latin, ceramic)." (The Four Gospels - Verse by verse, D. Kelly Ogden and Andrew C. Skinner, page 246). Though the use of tiles was not unheard of, it was not common during the time period at that location. Should this miracle have taken place in Rome, it might be more probable that there were literal tiles.

The most common roofs of the time are best described by Barclay. He wrote, "The roof of a Palestinian house was flat. It was regularly used as a place of rest and of quiet, and so usually there was an outside stair which ascended to it. The construction of the roof lent itself to what this ingenious four proposed to do. The roof consisted of flat beams laid across from wall to wall, perhaps three feet apart. The space in between the beams was filled with brushwood packed tight with clay. The top was then marled over. Very largely the roof was of earth and often a flourishing crop of grass grew on the roof of a Palestinian house. It was the easiest thing in the world to dig out the rifling between two of the beams; it did not even damage the house very much, and it was easy to repair the breach again." (The Gospel of Mark, The Daily Study Bible Series - Revised Edition, William Barclay, page 47)







There has been much written about the roofing of this story. Part of the confusion lies in the fact that the versions in the different Gospels slightly differ. Matthew and Mark speak of a common roof. **“The roof tiles of the common Palestinian house was made of wooden beams placed across stone or mudbrick walls; the beams were covered with reeds, matted layers of thorns, and several inches of clay. It was sloped and usually rolled before the rainy season. Such a roof could have been dug through. Luke, however, has changed the description, introducing the tiled roof of Hellenistic houses in the eastern Mediterranean area – making the action more intelligible to Greek-speaking Christian readers outside the Palestinian context.”** (The Gospel according to Luke I-IX: A New translation with Introduction and Commentary, The Anchor Yale Bible, Joseph A. Fitzmyer, page 582). One might suggest that the roof was a common clay roof, but Luke used terms that his audience would best understand even if the terms are not very accurate or clear. Luke would point towards a tile roof.

Let’s conclude by summarizing the various theories on how the friends dug through the roof and lowered the paralytic through it. **“Several explanations have been given of the manner in which they found access to Jesus after they reached the roof. Mark says that they ‘covered’ the roof, and ‘broke it up’; Luke says, ‘they let him down through the tiling’; Tile-roofs, however, are not common in Syria, though Greek houses are usually covered in this manner. This fact has led to the suggestion that Luke, being probably a native of Greek Antioch, may have used the word ‘tiling’ not in reference to the material of which the roof was made, but because it was to him the most familiar term which signified roofing. Both evangelists undoubtedly mean the covering which was over that part of the house where Jesus was. The following are the principal explanations which have been given of the manner in which the roof was uncovered :**

1. That the sick man was let down through the scuttle, or ordinary opening in the roof; this opening being first made large enough for the purpose by breaking the roof around its edge...
2. That the court, where Jesus and the people were assembled, was covered by an awning. The friends of the sick man, on reaching the roof, loosened this awning, and then let the paralytic down into the court...

3. That the ordinary roof of the house was actually broken up, the sticks, thorn-bush, mortar, and earth, of which it was composed, being thrown aside, until an aperture was made large enough to let the sick man through... the roof could easily be broken in this manner, and easily repaired ; that, as a matter of fact, it is often done for the purpose of letting down grain, straw, and other articles. He says: 'I have often seen it done, and done it myself to houses in Lebanon, but there is always more dust made than is agreeable.' The doctor, however, supposes that in the case referred to in the text the roof may have been made of materials more easily taken up, such as coarse matting, boards, or coarse slabs.
4. That the Saviour was in the gallery while he addressed the people around him and in the court below, and that it was the roof of this gallery which the friends of the sick man broke up. This is the opinion of Dr. Killo. He says: 'They had only to take up two or three of the loosely-attached boards forming the covering of the gallery, and there was a clear and sufficient opening through which to let their friend down to the feet of our Saviour'.

This last theory seems to us to present greater probabilities of correctness than any of the others, though every one of them shows how the incident recorded in the text was possible." (Manners and Customs of the Bible, James M. Freeman, pages 398-399).

97 - **couch** – The word “couch” is translated from the Greek word “κλινίδιον” or “klinidion”. It means a small bed or a couch. Fitzmyer translates “couch” as “literally, ‘with his pallet’”. Luke often uses the prep. Syn in the sense ‘along with’. ‘Pallet’ here translates Greek *klinidion*, the diminutive of *kline*, ‘stretcher’. It is probably a mere stylistic variant, but it could imply that the man was lowered on only part of what he had been carried on earlier.” (The Gospel according to Luke I-IX: A New translation with Introduction and Commentary, The Anchor Yale Bible, Joseph A. Fitzmyer, page 582),

98 - **into the midst** – The word “midst” is translated from the Greek word “μέσος” or “mesos”. It means the middle, the midst, in the midst of, or amongst.



The Paralytic man was lowered into the house to the area where Jesus was teaching. We do not know exactly where Jesus was teaching in the house. Some speculate that He was teaching in the inner court. Others theorize that such teachings were commonly given in an upper room, assuming that there was an upper room. “We know, from many Talmudical passages, that the Rabbis resorted in preference to ‘the upper room’ when discussing religious questions. It may have been so in this instance; and, unable to gain access through the door which led into the upper room, the bearers of the sick man may have broken down the ceiling from the roof. Or, judging it more likely that the attendant multitude thronged the court beneath, while Jesus stood in the gallery that ran round the court and opened into the various apartments, they might have broken down the roof above Him, and so slowly let down their burden at His feet, and in sight of them all. There is a significant parallelism, or rather contrast, to this in a Rabbinical story (Moed K. 25 a), which relates how, when the bier on which a celebrated teacher was laid could not be passed out at the door, they carried up their burden and let it down from the roof—on its way, not to a new life, but to burial. Otherwise, there was also a stair which led from the roof into the court and house.” (Sketches of Jewish Social Life, Alfred Edersheim, page 55).

99 - **Man** – The word “Man” is translated from the Greek word “ἄνθρωπος” or “anthrōpos”. It means a human being, whether male or female.

100 - **God alone** – The word “alone” is translated from the Greek word “μόνος” or “monos”. It means alone (without a companion), forsaken, alone, only, or by themselves. The Jews believed that only God has the ability to forgive sins. I will not argue with that doctrine as I believe it to be true. I also believe Jesus to be a member of the Godhead with divine authority to act on His Father’s behalf. Additionally, I believe that we have a divine role in the process. God expects us to bring souls unto Him, so that they might obtain forgiveness. “In a rather profound interpretation, one non-LDS source suggested that the four friends symbolize the fact that it usually takes more than one person to save those who are paralyzed by sin. Paraphrasing the old proverb, ‘it takes a village’ to turn one steeped in sin toward Christ. Thus, the four friends well represent bodies like the ward council. When individuals from various quorums and auxiliaries unite together to save an individual or family struggling with sin or complacency, miracles can happen.” (Miracles of the New Testament: A Guide to the Symbolic Messages, Alonzo L. Gaskill, page 74). God forgives while He commissions us to bring people unto Christ so that He might forgive them of their sins as well.

101 - **Rise** – The word “Rise” is translated from the Greek word “ἐγείρω” or “egeirō”. It means to arouse, or to cause to arise. It is generally used in connection with sleep or death. In this case, the paralytic man was commanded to rise when physically incapable of standing. The command must have seemed unreasonable and more so impossible.

102 - **rose up** – The word “rose up” is translated from the Greek word “ἀνίστημι” or “anistēmi”. It means to cause to rise up or stand up. The paralytic man was healed. He stood for all to see. He had full control of his faculties and limbs. He rose fully healed.

103 - **took up that whereon** – The phrase “took up” is translated from the Greek word “αἶρω” or “airō”. It means to raise up, elevate or lift up.

104 - **filled with fear** – The word “filled” is translated from the Greek word “πλήρωμι” or “pimplēmi”. It means to fill, to be fulfilled or to be filled. The word “fear” is translated from the Greek word “φόβος” or “phobos”. It means fear, dread, or terror. It can also be used for reverence towards one’s husband.

“The story begins with a description of the physical setting: Jesus returns to Capernaum, his base of operations for the early portion of his ministry, and is ‘at home’ there, preaching ‘the word.’” (Mark 1-8: A New translation with Introduction and Commentary, The Anchor Yale Bible, Joel Marcus, page 220). Gospel teaching, properly understood, results in faith. True faith leads to works of faith. Those that truly believe cannot fear because faith is opposite of fear. The two cannot exist at the same time. Those with faith marveled at Jesus’ works. “And this open outburst of faith shone out the more brightly, from its contrast with the covered darkness and clouds of unbelief within the breast of those Scribes, who had come to watch and ensnare Jesus.” (The Life and Times of Jesus the Messiah, Volume 1, Alfred Edersheim, page 504). Those that lacked faith were filled with fear. It has been said that we fear that which we do not understand. Such is the relationship with the spirit. The spirit is the source of all truth and understanding.

105 - **strange things** – The phrase “strange things” is translated from the Greek word “παράδοξος” or “paradoxos”. It means unexpected, uncommon, incredible, or wonderful. “Today we have seen remarkable things. Literally, ‘things contrary to expectation.’ This Greek word is used only here in the New Testament, and it is noteworthy that it is related to a miracle.” (The Gospel according to Luke I-IX: A New translation with Introduction and Commentary, The Anchor Yale Bible, Joseph A. Fitzmyer, page 586). The Lord has always taught that His people are a peculiar people. Peculiar because their works are not of this world, nor are they always understood by the minds and knowledge of men. Jesus performed the works of heaven, which are a strange thing to mortal men.