

Exegetical Notes, Luke 5:17-26
“A Paralytic Healed”

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Luke 5:17-26

Verse 17a

One day as he was teaching, Pharisees and teachers of the law, who had come from every village of Galilee and from Judea and Jerusalem, were sitting there.

- The teachers of the law and the Pharisees were important religious leaders among the Jews. Jesus attracted their attention and they came in large numbers from all parts of the region to “check him out.” They wanted to see if they approved of him. It is reasonable to assume that, at the beginning, their minds were open. But they quickly decided against Jesus and became his enemies.
- Sitting was the posture of authority. By sitting they indicate that they are superior to all of the others present.

Verse 17b

And the power of the Lord was present for him to heal the sick.

- Jesus was under the full power of the Holy Spirit. He was prepared by the Holy Spirit to perform acts of healing.

Verse 18-19

Some men came carrying a paralytic on a mat and tried to take him into the house to lay him before Jesus. When they could not find a way to do this because of the crowd, they went up on the roof and lowered him on his mat through the tiles into the middle of the crowd, right in front of Jesus.

- A paralyzed man was brought to Jesus to be cured. However, the crowd blocked the sick man’s friends from bringing him, in his bed, into the house where Jesus was. They took the man up onto the roof and lowered him down through the roof to a place in the house directly in front of Jesus. This would have caused a huge commotion.

Verse 20

When Jesus saw their faith, he said, “Friend, your sins are forgiven.”

- The persistence of the man’s friends impressed Jesus. He saw their faith in their deed.
- As Jesus recognized the spiritual nature of illness and knew why the man was in the state he was in, he healed him by forgiving the man’s sin.

Verse 21

The Pharisees and the teachers of the law began thinking to themselves, “Who is this fellow who speaks blasphemy? Who can forgive sins but God alone?”

- The religious leaders knew that only God had the power to forgive sin. Since they did not believe that Jesus was God, they thought he was blaspheming, taking to himself the name and power of God.
- But they did not express these thoughts openly. They were thinking these things to themselves.

Verse 22-26

Jesus knew what they were thinking and asked, “Why are you thinking these things in your hearts? Which is easier: to say, ‘Your sins are forgiven,’ or to say, ‘Get up and walk’? But that you may know that the Son of Man has authority on earth to forgive sins...” He said to the paralyzed man, “I tell you, get up, take your mat and go home.” Immediately he stood up in front of them, took what he had been lying on and went home praising God. Everyone was amazed and gave praise to God. They were filled with awe and said, “We have seen remarkable things today.”

- Jesus revealed that he could read what those around him were thinking.
- He countered the thoughts of the religious leaders by exposing them and then healing the man in an acceptable way. By doing so, he showed that he had the power not only to heal but also to forgive sin.
- The man who was healed praised God.
- All the people who watched praised God.
- The religious leaders were confused. They could not bring themselves to approve of Jesus, but for the moment, he had silenced them.

(These exegetical notes are the foundational study for the sermon entitled *A Paralytic Healed*. They have been prepared by the Reverend Doctor Charles H. Jensen, Senior Pastor at Cornerstone Fellowship, Coatesville Pennsylvania. All rights are reserved by Dr. Jensen and *Cornerstone Fellowship*.)