

Yeshua Heals a Paralyzed Man **To Be Like Yeshua Means – To Serve Others**

In this post, we pick up our exploration of what it means to serve in Matthew 9. Yeshua has just delivered two demoniacs from evil and is getting ready to return to His base of operation in K'far-Nachum.

"So he stepped into a boat, crossed the lake again and came to his own town. Some people brought him a paralyzed man lying on a mattress." ~ Mathew 9:1-2. Mark actually gives a more detailed account of this story, so I'm going to use that passage to explore this amazing healing account. As you read this narrative, try to picture yourself in the scene. You can be one of the friends bringing their man to Yeshua for healing OR part of the crowd OR one of the Torah-teachers OR (my favorite) perhaps the owner of the house.

"After a while, Yeshua returned to K'far-Nachum. The word spread that he was back, and so many people gathered around the house that there was no longer any room, not even in front of the door. While he was preaching the message to them, four men came to him carrying a paralyzed man. They could not get near Yeshua because of the crowd, so they stripped the roof over the place where he was, made an opening, and lowered the stretcher with the paralytic lying on it. Seeing their trust, Yeshua said to the paralyzed man, 'Son, your sins are forgiven.' Some Torah-teachers sitting there thought to themselves, 'How can this fellow say such a thing? He is blaspheming! Who can forgive sins except God?' But immediately Yeshua, perceiving in his spirit what they were thinking, said to them, 'Why are you thinking these things? Which is easier to say to the paralyzed man? 'Your sins are forgiven' or 'Get up, pick up your stretcher and walk?' But look! I will prove to you that the Son of Man has authority on earth to forgive sins.' He then said to the paralytic, 'I say to you: get up, pick up your stretcher and go home!' In front of everyone the man got up, picked up his stretcher at once and left. They were all utterly amazed and praised God, saying, 'We have never seen anything like this!'" ~ Mark 2:1-12

In the comment section below, share who you pictured yourself to be and what you felt or learned by being there? For me, as the owner of the house, my first feeling was being awestruck at this miracle that occurred in front of my eyes and then immediately began to worry about who was going to pay to get my roofed fixed.

Matthew's Gospel explains how ***Yeshua saw their trust (or faith)*** (v. 2). There was such a crowd gathered around the door to the house that the men carrying the man on the mat could not get through to the house. So they went up on the roof and took off enough tiles to lower their friend through the roof to Yeshua below (Mark 2:1-4). They knew that if they could just get near Yeshua, Yeshua could heal. Yeshua referred to the faith of all the men who came but spoke only to the paralytic. ***Son*** was simply a term of affection, used even with adults. (Yeshua must have been a Southerner. They talk like that all the time in the South.)

Thus far in our lessons, Matthew has shown Yeshua's authority in his teaching (7:28-29), in healing of diseases (8:1-17), over any other allegiance (8:18-22), over nature (8:23-27), and over demons (8:16, 28-34); in this miracle, Matthew showed Yeshua's authority to forgive sins. Yeshua said to the paralyzed man, ***"Son, your sins are forgiven."***

We know that sickness and death result from humanity's sinful condition. That does not mean that we can measure a person's spiritual health by looking at his or her physical health. But all sickness and death are the result of evil and sin. This man was paralyzed because of sin. Yeshua spoke first to that condition. The man needed spiritual healing, so Yeshua forgave his sins. Then Yeshua healed the man. Both the man's body and his spirit were paralyzed; he could not walk, and he was not yet one of Yeshua's

talmidim. But the man's spiritual state was Yeshua's first concern. If God does not heal us or someone we love, we need to remember that physical healing is not His only concern. We will all be completely healed in His coming kingdom; but first we must become his talmidim. God offers the same forgiveness given to the paralytic to all who believe.

The Greek word translated **forgiven** means to leave or let go, to give up a debt, to send away from oneself. When we say we have forgiven a person, we mean that we have renewed our relationship despite the wrong that the person did. But we cannot change the act itself. And without a healing of memories session, it is almost impossible to forget the hurt that was caused by the transgression. But the Greek notion of forgiveness goes far beyond our human capacity, for it includes the "putting away" of sin in two ways:

1. The law and justice are satisfied because Yeshua paid the penalty that our sins deserved; thus, they can no longer be held against us.
2. The guilt caused by our sin is removed and replaced with His righteousness. We are so forgiven that, in God's eyes, it is as if we had never sinned.

If Yeshua had done this and nothing more for the man, the man should have been satisfied. If Yeshua had healed his body and had not dealt with his sinful condition, the man would have been ultimately worse.

Spiritual sickness is Yeshua's primary concern. He wants people to enjoy a right relationship with God - faithful discipleship, sturdy assurance of God's love, freedom from spiritual oppression. So Yeshua intentionally relieved the paralytic of the burden of his sins first, and then, second, of his physical paralysis. When you think of the good things Yeshua brings to you, thank him for forgiveness first of all. With sins forgiven, you are made right with God. With sins forgiven, your biggest problem - beyond your own skill to correct - has been solved. Yeshua has become your Savior, the greatest gift of all. Serve others by introducing them to Yeshua, so they may experience his blessings upon their lives.

In my next post, we will look at how Yeshua responds to a charge of blasphemy as a result of the healing miracle for the paralyzed man.