Research: Jesus heals man sick of the palsy

Matt 9:2-8

This is the same healing as told in Mark, where the man is let down through the tiles of the roof to be in front of Jesus.

2 And, behold, they brought to him a man sick of the palsy, lying on a bed: and Jesus seeing their faith said unto the sick of the palsy; Son, be of good cheer; thy sins be forgiven thee.

“The man was borne on a couch (St. Mark uses the Greek form of the Latin *grabatum,* the bed or mattress of the poor) carried by four bearers ([Mark 2:3](http://biblehub.com/mark/2-3.htm)). They sought to bring him through the door, but were hindered by the crowd; and then going outside the house, they got upon the roof, removed part of the roof, let him down with ropes through the opening into the midst of the crowd, just in front of the Teacher ([Mark 2:4](http://biblehub.com/mark/2-4.htm); [Luke 5:19](http://biblehub.com/luke/5-19.htm)). This persistency implied faith in His power to heal on the part both of the sick man and the bearers” ([www.biblehub.com](http://www.biblehub.com), Ellicott’s Commentary).

The word “palsy” is *paralytikos*, which means “suffering from the relaxing of the nerves of one’s side, disabled, weak of limb” (Thayer 484).

“Palsy can result from cerebral damage, injury sustained by the spinal column, or disease of the central nervous system, characterized by a lack of ability to move or to exercise full bodily functions” (*IBD 3*.646).

In *Science and Health, with Key to the Scriptures*, Mary Baker Eddy describes the disease as a function of mortal mind.

375:21 Palsy is a belief that matter governs mortals, and can paralyze the body, making certain portions of it motionless. Destroy the belief, show mortal palsy that muscles have no power to be lost, for Mind is supreme, and you cure the palsy. If palsy was thought to be the result of past sin, it could have meant that the man had indulged in appetites and passions in his youth such as drunkenness, debauchery, gluttony and self-indulgence.

It is important to always pay attention to whatever Jesus says and does in his healing work and also to be aware of the specific words used in the text. The verb, “to see,” is *eido* in Greek and means “to perceive with the eyes, to turn the mind to, to behold, to know, understand, perceive” (Thayer 173). It is a mental quality of insight and conviction. It says that Jesus **saw** their faith.

“Faith” in Greek is *pistis* and means “the conviction of the truth of anything, the conviction of good, confidence or belief that [Jesus] could heal him” (Thayer 512).

How was Jesus seeing this man?

One word for son or child is huios in Greek. “Huios gives evidence of the dignity of one’s relationship and likeness to God’s character” (Hebrew-Greek Key 1764). One who is Godlike is the image and likenss of God. Was this Jesus’ son? Was he really sayng to this man, “Do you know who you really are as God’s child, his precious son”?

“Not only drunkenness, but various other sins of self-indulgence produce paralysis. Jesus, who knew at a glance the whole history of the case, first removed the sick man’s spiritual trouble, and then healed him” (Dummelow 656).

Jesus recognized the man’s need for spiritual restoration. The thoughts of the man needed to be addressed. Pride, envy, self-seeking and lust are just a sample of the kinds of sinful thoughts that might have been in this man’s consciousness. Sin and sickness are related as cause and effect.

Mrs. Eddy explains the relationship between sin and sickness in her writings:

No 31:21-22

Physical and mental healing were one and the same with this master Metaphysician.

392:4-5

To cure a bodily ailment, every broken moral law should

be taken into account and the error be rebuked.

419:1 (only)

A moral question may hinder the recovery of the sick.

411:20-21

The procuring cause and foundation of all sickness is fear, ignorance, or sin.

“The miracle that is now to be described was only the most glorious and worthy to be recorded of many then performed; and what made it so was doubtless the faith which was manifested in connection with it, and the proclamation of the forgiveness of the patient’s sins that immediately preceded it” (Jamieson 3.141).

3 And, behold, certain of the scribes said within themselves, This *man* blasphemeth.

Only God has power to forgive sins, and if Jesus has really blasphemed, the penalty for this transgression is stoning to death.

“**This man blasphemeth.**—The words were but an echo of the charge that had been brought at Jerusalem, that “He made Himself equal with God” ([John 5:18](http://biblehub.com/john/5-18.htm)), and may well have come from some of the same objectors. St. Mark and St. Luke give the grounds of their accusation: “What is this that this Man thus speaks? Who can forgive sins but One, that is, God?” (Ellicott’s Commentary, www.biblehub.com).

4 And Jesus knowing their thoughts said, Wherefore think ye evil in your hearts?

The scribes were blind, skeptical and unbelieving. Instead of recognizing the import of Jesus’ new teaching of God, they accused him for departing from tradition. Scholastic theology was a barrier and obstruction to their receptivity to healing. But Jesus read their thoughts and questioned their hardness of heart.

SH 85:15-17

    It is recorded that Jesus, as he once journeyed with his   
students, “knew their thoughts,” — read them scientifi-  
cally.

5 For whether is easier, to say, *Thy* sins be forgiven thee; or to say, Arise, and walk?

“‘Whether is easier,’ said He, ‘to say, Thy sins are forgiven; or to say, Arise, and walk?’ The former, of course, is easier. Any impostor can say, ‘Thy sins are forgiven,’ because it is impossible for men to know whether the words have taken effect or not. But not everyone can say, ‘Arise, and walk,’ because if such words are spoken without authority, the speaker is at once convicted of imposture” (Dummelow 656).

To profess the power to forgive sins is easy because the change occurs within the consciousness of the one being forgiven. But to ask a paralytic man to get up and walk, there must be visible proof.

6 But that ye may know that the Son of man hath power on earth to forgive sins, (then saith he to the sick of the palsy,) Arise, take up thy bed, and go unto thine house.

Jesus truly had divine authority to forgive sins. If God can forgive them, then certainly His image can. “He did the miracle which they could see that they might know that he had done the other one that they could not see” (*EBC 8*.633).

“Arise” in Greek is *egeiro* and means “to arouse from sleep, to awaken, to rise up” (Thayer 165). Jesus did not assist him physically. The man had to do it himself.

Perhaps Jesus revealed to the man that the bed no longer dominated him because he had dominion over all of the mortal lies associated with the concept of *bed*. The burden of a guilty conscience was gone and he was free! We all can exercise the “divine authority” that our Leader describes in *Science and Health*.

393:10

Exercise this God-given authority. Take

possession of your body, and govern its feeling and action.

Rise in the strength of Spirit to resist all that is unlike

good. God has made man capable of this, and nothing

can vitiate the ability and power divinely bestowed on man.

7 And he arose, and departed to his house.

Absolutely no recovery time was needed, no physical therapy, no recuperation, no process. Jesus spoke the word and immediately the man was free! There is nothing between God and His image. When sinful beliefs are eliminated through Christ, Truth, the outward manifestation vanishes. Without a cause, there can be no effect.

 “**He arose, and departed to his house.**—St. Mark adds his usual “immediately”; St. Luke, that he went “glorifying God.” We can picture to ourselves the exultant joy of the soul freed from the burden of its sins, and rejoicing in the new vitality of the body” ([Ellicott’s](http://www.Ellicott's) Commentary, www.biblehub.com).

8 But when the multitudes saw *it,* they marvelled, and glorified God, which had given such power unto men.

“To "glorify" God, here, means to "praise him," or to acknowledge his power. The expression, "which had given such power to people," was a part of "their" praise. It expresses no sentiment of the evangelist about the nature of Christ, but is a record of their feelings and their praise” (Barnes’ Notes, www.biblehub.com).