

# Luke 05 - First Disciples Called; Messianic Miracle #1 (Healing a Leper); Jewish Response; Jesus Heals Paralytic; Call of Matthew

III. Galilean ministry of the Son of Man (Luke 4:14—9:50)

(2) Initial Ministry (4:31—5:16)

(D) Miraculous catch of the fish (5:1-11)

(E) Healing of the leper (5:12-16)

(3) Conflict (Luke 5:17—6:11)

(A) Forgiving sins (5:17-26)

(B) Fellowshiping with the sinners (5:27-32)

(C) Not fasting (5:33-39)

## Luke 5

(D) Miraculous catch of the fish (5:1-11) (Cf. Matt 4:18-22; Mark 1:16-20; John 1:35-42)

**1** Now it happened that while the crowd was pressing around Him and **listening to the word of God**, He was standing by the **lake of Gennesaret**;

**1** Now it happened that while the crowd was pressing around Him and listening to the word of God, He was standing by the lake of Gennesaret;

**1** One day, as the crowd was pressing in on him to listen to God's word, Jesus was standing by the lake of Gennesaret.

**1** And it came to pass, that, as the people pressed upon him to hear the word of God, he stood by the lake of Gennesaret,

- "...listening to the word of God" - the people were so interested that they pressed upon Jesus

- "...lake of Gennesaret" - from *kinnowr*, it is a harp-shaped lake. We call it the Sea of Galilee. It's also known as the Sea of Tiberias.

— "Gennesaret" was the town and plain on the NW coast, from which the lake received one of its names

2 and He saw two boats lying at the edge of the lake; but the fishermen had gotten out of them and were washing their nets.

2 and He saw two boats lying at the edge of the lake; but the fishermen had gotten out of them and were washing their nets.

2 He saw two boats lying on the shore, but the fishermen had stepped out of them and were washing their nets.

2 And saw two ships standing by the lake: but the fishermen were gone out of them, and were washing *their* nets.

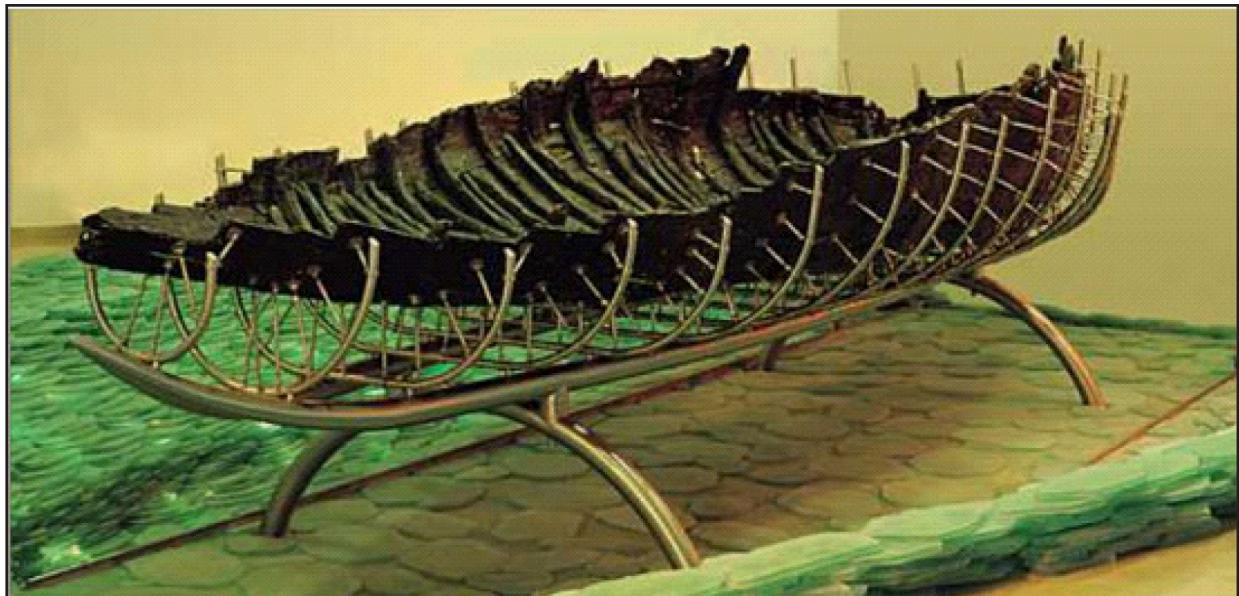
- "...nets" - the fisherman used large nets when they fished all night, which Zebedee, James and John were now mending and washing (Cf. Matt 4:21; Mark 1:19)

— Peter and Andrew were using a smaller round casting net, throwing it into the water from close to shore (Matt 4:18; Mark 1:16)

- This should not be confused with another later incident when they were mending their nets. They had finished an all-night vigil with little to show for it. (Fishing includes carp, sardine, mullet, catfish, and combfish.)

### **The Ancient Boat Discovery**

In 1986, a 2000-year-old boat was discovered preserved in mud during a record low. It was radiocarbon dated: 85 BC—15 AD and thus appears typical of the Gospel period. It appears to be the kind of fishing boat they would have used in Jesus' day. It is approximately 27ft long, 7½ft wide.



After careful chemical treatments, it has been placed on display in a specially built facility, Yigal Allon Museum, next to Kibbutz Nof Ginosar, since 1995.

3 And He got into one of the boats, which was Simon's, and asked him to put out a little *distance* from the land. And He sat down and *continued* teaching the crowds from the boat.

3 And He got into one of the boats, which was Simon's, and asked him to put out a little way from the land. And He sat down and *began* teaching the people from the boat.

3 So Jesus got into one of the boats (the one that belonged to Simon) and asked him to push out a little from the shore. Then he sat down and began to teach the crowds from the boat.

3 And he entered into one of the ships, which was Simon's, and prayed him that he would thrust out a little from the land. And he sat down, and taught the people out of the ship.

- He used the boat as an improvised pulpit to address the pressing crowd, creating some space between Him and them.

4 Now when He had finished speaking, He said to Simon, "Put out into the deep water and let down your nets for a catch."

4 When He had finished speaking, He said to Simon, "Put out into the deep water and let down your nets for a catch."

4 When he had finished speaking, he told Simon, "Push out into deep water, and lower your nets for a catch."

4 Now when he had left speaking, he said unto Simon, Launch out into the deep, and let down your nets for a draught.

- Jesus' command to launch out into the deep water for another try at fishing contrasts Jesus' authority with the natural ability of these men.

— Peter's obedience shows his respect for Jesus, which ultimately led to a large catch of fish

- Jesus assumed command. He's always in command.

5 Simon responded and said, "**Master**, we worked hard all night and caught nothing, but I will do as You say *and* let down the nets."

5 Simon answered and said, "Master, we worked hard all night and caught nothing, but I will do as You say *and* let down the nets."

5 Simon answered, "Master, we have worked hard all night and caught nothing. But if you say so, I'll lower the nets."

5 And Simon answering said unto him, Master, we have toiled all the night, and have taken nothing: nevertheless at thy word I will let down the net.

- As a professional fisherman, he knew that during the day the fish would be too deep.

- "...Master" - *epistata*, overseer; captain

6 And when they had done this, they caught a great quantity of fish, and their nets *began* to tear;

6 When they had done this, they enclosed a great quantity of fish, and their nets *began* to break;

6 After the men had done this, they caught so many fish that the nets began to tear.

6 And when they had this done, they inclosed a great multitude of fishes: and their net brake.

- At another early morning, later, after the resurrection, this would again be a means of recognition (John 21:1-13)

— Peter then went fishing—a reprise of the incident here.

7 so they signaled to their **partners** in the other boat to come and help them. And they came and filled both of the boats, to the point that they were sinking.

7 so they signaled to their partners in the other boat for them to come and help them. And they came and filled both of the boats, so that they began to sink.

7 So they signaled to their partners in the other boat to come and help them. They came and filled both boats until the boats began to sink.

7 And they beckoned unto *their* partners, which were in the other ship, that they should come and help them. And they came, and filled both the ships, so that they began to sink.

- "...partners" - *metochois*, (business) partners; two pairs of brothers were present: Peter and Andrew, and James and John. They were involved in a business venture under Peter's lead.

8 But when Simon Peter saw *this*, he fell down at Jesus' knees, saying, "Go away from me, Lord, for **I am a sinful man!**"

8 But when Simon Peter saw *that*, he fell down at Jesus' feet, saying, "Go away from me Lord, for I am a sinful man!"

8 When Simon Peter saw this, he fell down at Jesus' knees and said, "Leave me, Lord! I am a sinful man!"—

**8** When Simon Peter saw *it*, he fell down at Jesus' knees, saying, Depart from me; for I am a sinful man, O Lord.

- "...I am a sinful man!" - this is always the response in the Bible when people are confronted with deity: Peter recognizes that Jesus is not mere mortal man.

— He saw himself in perspective. Much like the reactions of Job (Job 42:5-6), Isaiah (Is 6:1-5), and John (Rev 1:17).

— When confronted with God, the experience is overwhelming. We're presented with both the majesty of the Deity, and an awareness of our own unworthiness.

9 For **amazement** had seized him and all his companions because of the catch of fish which they had taken;  
9 For amazement had seized him and all his companions because of the catch of fish which they had taken;  
9 because Simon and all the people who were with him were amazed at the number of fish they had caught,  
9 For he was astonished, and all that were with him, at the draught of the fishes which they had taken:  
- "...amazement" - *thambos*, this was the reaction of the *experienced professionals*

10 and likewise also *were* James and John, sons of Zebedee, who were partners with Simon. And Jesus said to Simon, "**Do not fear; from now on you will be catching people.**"  
10 and so also *were* James and John, sons of Zebedee, who were partners with Simon. And Jesus said to Simon, "**Do not fear, from now on you will be catching men.**"  
10 and so were James and John, Zebedee's sons and Simon's partners. Then Jesus told Simon, "**Stop being afraid. From now on you will be catching people.**"  
10 And so *was* also James, and John, the sons of Zebedee, which were partners with Simon. And Jesus said unto Simon, **Fear not; from henceforth thou shalt catch men.**  
- Jesus does not reject sinners who feel conviction because of their sin. He draws them to Himself and sends them out to serve Him  
- "...you will be catching people" - *zogreo*, catch men alive  
— A call to full-time discipleship. A second call. There was also a third (John 21).  
— Jesus used the fish to represent people that Peter would draw into the kingdom of God, and before that, into the church (Cf. Acts 2; 10:9-48)  
— Fishermen caught live fish to kill them, but the disciples would be catching people who were dead to give them life  
- We know very little of Andrew, and James was martyred very early (Acts 12:1-2), but Peter and John were granted many years of devoted service and their written ministry has edified untold millions

In the middle of teaching many, Jesus calls a few people to more focused service. Peter is one example of such a call. Everyone has a ministry, and all are equal before God, but some are called to serve Him directly. Peter has the three necessary qualities Jesus is looking for. He is willing to go where Jesus leads, he is humble, and he is fully committed.

11 When they had brought their boats to land, they left everything and followed Him.  
11 When they had brought their boats to land, they left everything and followed Him.  
11 So when they brought the boats to shore, they left everything and followed Jesus.

11 And when they had brought their ships to land, they forsook all, and followed him.  
- Forsook all: *they left everything*. They turned their backs on their investment, livelihood, families, etc. (Cf. 14:33; 18:22)

The next two healings brought about a confrontation with the religious establishment—the first such conflict recorded in Luke. Both healings authenticated Jesus' claim to be the Messiah (Luke 4:18-21).

(E) Healing of the leper (5:12-16) (Cf. Matt 8:2-4; Mark 1:40-45)

### **Messianic Miracle #1: Healing of the Leper**

**12** While He was in one of the cities, behold, *there was* a man **covered with leprosy**; and when he saw Jesus, he fell on his face and begged Him, saying, "**Lord, if You are willing, You can make me clean.**"

**12** While He was in one of the cities, behold, *there was* a man covered with leprosy; and when he saw Jesus, he fell on his face and implored Him, saying, "Lord, if You are willing, You can make me clean."

**12** One day, while Jesus was in one of the cities, a man covered with leprosy saw Jesus and fell on his face, begging him, "Lord, if you want to, you can make me clean."

**12** And it came to pass, when he was in a certain city, behold a man full of leprosy: who seeing Jesus fell on *his* face, and besought him, saying, Lord, if thou wilt, thou canst make me clean.

- "...covered with leprosy" - an advanced state; serious; it wouldn't be long before the man would die.

- "...Lord, if You are willing, You can make me clean" - the leper clearly recognized the authority of Jesus as the Messiah, who had the power to heal a leper. The only question on the part of the leper was His willingness to do so.

— The leper was very bold in coming to Jesus, since his leprosy separated him from normal social contact

— His request expresses a sense of unworthiness to receive such a blessing of healing

### **Messianic Miracles**

Prior to the Incarnation, the ancient rabbis separated miracles into two categories: miracles anyone would be able to perform if they were empowered by the Spirit of God, and miracles that only the Messiah would be able to perform ("Messianic Miracles"). Jesus performed miracles in both categories: general miracles and Messianic miracles. Because of the rabbinic teaching that certain miracles would be reserved only for the Messiah to do, whenever He performed a Messianic miracle, it created a different type of reaction than when He performed other types of miracles.

- Messianic Miracle #1: Healing a Leper (Matt 8:2-4; Mark 1:40-45; Luke 5:12-16)
- Messianic Miracle #2: Casting Out a Dumb Demon (Matt 12:22-37; Mark 3:20-30; Luke 11:14-26)
- Messianic Miracle #3: Healing a Man Born Blind (John 9:1-41)

### **Lepers and the Law**

It was the task of the Jewish priest to examine people to determine whether they were lepers (Lev 13). The Law commanded strict segregation of a person who had leprosy, for it was a graphic picture of uncleanness. A leprosy person could not worship at the central sanctuary; he was ceremonially unclean and therefore cut off completely from the community.

Like sin, leprosy is deeper than the skin (Lev 13:3) and cannot be helped by mere "surface" measures (Cf. Jer 6:14). Like sin, leprosy spreads (Lev 13:7-8); and as it spreads, it defiles (Lev 13:44-45). Because of his defilement, a leprosy person had to be isolated outside the camp (Lev 13:46), and lost sinners one day will be isolated in hell. People with leprosy were looked on as "dead" (Num 12:12), and garments infected with leprosy were fit only for the fire (Lev 13:52).

Sin controls by two lies:

- (1) Nothing is wrong with us
- (2) Nothing can be done for us; we are beyond help. Our misconceptions about Satan are the same way: He doesn't exist or he is too powerful to conquer.

13 And He reached out with His hand and touched him, saying, **"I am willing; be cleansed."** And immediately the leprosy left him.

13 And He stretched out His hand and touched him, saying, **"I am willing; be cleansed."** And immediately the leprosy left him.

13 So Jesus reached out his hand and touched him, saying, **"I do want to. Be clean!"** Instantly the leprosy left him.

**13** And he put forth *his* hand, and touched him, saying, **I will: be thou clean.** And immediately the leprosy departed from him.

- The leper had broken the law to get to Jesus. He was supposed to avoid people, ring bells and yell, "Unclean!"

- By stretching out His hand and touching the leper, Jesus was doing the unthinkable (Lev 13)

- "...cleansed" - Jesus never healed a leper, He *cleansed* them

- When someone clean touched something unclean, the clean became unclean.

**— Luke showed that Jesus was the Source of ceremonial cleansing: If He was the Source of cleansing for that leper; He would also be the Source of cleansing for the nation.**



14 And He ordered him to tell **no one**, saying, "But go and show yourself to the priest, and make an offering for your cleansing, **just as Moses commanded**, as a testimony to them."

14 And He ordered him to tell no one, "But go and show yourself to the priest and make an offering for your cleansing, just as Moses commanded, as a testimony to them."

14 Then Jesus ordered him, "Don't tell anyone. Instead, go and show yourself to the priest and make an offering for your cleansing, just as Moses commanded, as proof to the authorities."

14 And he charged him to tell no man: but go, and shew thyself to the priest, and offer for thy cleansing, according as Moses commanded, for a testimony unto them.

- Healing from leprosy was rare: the OT records only Miriam and Naaman as having been cleansed of leprosy (Num 12; 2 Kings 5)

— Thus it may have been extremely unusual for a person to present himself before the priest and offer the sacrifices for cleansing.

- "...no one" - refers to the leadership of Israel

- "...just as Moses commanded" - instructions for an offering for cleansing from leprosy are given in Lev 14:1-32: to fulfill the Law. Luke emphasized the phrase "for a testimony to them."

**— The fact that a man would go to the priest claiming healing from leprosy would alert the leadership in Israel that the Messianic Age had come. The religious leaders of Israel taught that the healing of a leper was a Messianic miracle. Anyone healing a leper would, by the very act, claim to be the Messiah Himself.**

- Jesus deliberately sent the cleansed leper to the priesthood in order to get the leaders to start investigating His messianic claims and come to a decision about the messianic claims. He wanted to force the Jewish leadership to make a decision regarding His Person—that He was the Messiah; and His message—that He was offering to Israel the Kingdom predicted by the Jewish prophets.

— The man's testimony to his cleansing amounted to an announcement of Messiah's arrival

- Why did Jesus command him not to tell anyone? Two possible reasons:

(1) The man was to go immediately to the priest to be a testimony; it was required by the law (Lev 14:1-32). It would be inappropriate for the man to announce his healing before a priest examined him and made an official announcement that he was clean (Lev 14:57). Jesus was careful not to usurp this priestly authority.

(2) As the news of Jesus' healing power spread, He was constantly besieged by people, which caused Him to have to withdraw.

For the next seven days, they intensively investigated the situation and discovered three things:



- (1) The man originally had leprosy
- (2) The man was perfectly healed of leprosy
- (3) Jesus of Nazareth was the One who healed the man of leprosy

15 But the news about Him was spreading *even* farther, and large crowds were gathering to hear *Him* and to be healed of their sicknesses.

15 But the news about Him was spreading even farther, and large crowds were gathering to hear *Him* and to be healed of their sicknesses.

15 But the news about Jesus spread even more, and many crowds began gathering to hear him and to be healed of their diseases.

**15** But so much the more went there a fame abroad of him: and great multitudes came together to hear, and to be healed by him of their infirmities.

- Luke omitted the fact that the man disobeyed Jesus (Cf. Mark 1:45). He also wrote of the people's hearing Jesus before experiencing healing, reflecting the priority of Jesus' preaching over His miracles.

— Jesus told him to be quiet, yet he told everyone. Jesus told us to tell everyone, and yet we keep quiet.

16 But *Jesus* Himself would *often* slip away to the wilderness and pray.

16 But Jesus Himself would *often* slip away to the wilderness and pray.

16 However, he continued his habit of retiring to deserted places and praying.

16 And he withdrew himself into the wilderness, and prayed.

- He previously went into the wilderness to fast, and was tempted by Satan. This time, He went into the wilderness for the purpose of praying: He was praying for what would happen next, and how the leadership of Israel would respond to this messianic miracle.

— If *He* thought it was necessary to pray, what about *us*!

(A) Forgiving sins (5:17-26) (Cf. Matt 9:1-8; Mark 2:1-12)

**17** One day He was **teaching**, and there were *some* Pharisees and **teachers of the Law** sitting *there* who had come from every village of Galilee and Judea, and *from* Jerusalem; and **the power of the Lord** was *present* for Him to perform healing.

**17** One day He was teaching; and there were *some* Pharisees and teachers of the law sitting *there*, who had come from every village of Galilee and Judea and *from* Jerusalem; and the power of the Lord was *present* for Him to perform healing.

**17** One day, as Jesus was teaching, some Pharisees and teachers of the Law happened to be sitting nearby. The people had come from every village in Galilee and Judea and from Jerusalem. The power of the Lord was present to heal them.

**17** And it came to pass on a certain day, as he was teaching, that there were Pharisees and doctors of the law sitting by, which were come out of every town of Galilee, and Judaea, and Jerusalem: and the power of the Lord was *present* to heal them.

- "...teaching" - Luke again stresses the priority of Jesus' teaching ministry.

- The "Pharisees and doctors of the law (scribes)" had come to hear what He was teaching. These men were the guardians of Israel's orthodoxy.

- "...teachers of the Law" - *nomodidaskalos*, some were probably Pharisees; they were "religious watchdogs"

- Mark's account notes that this event took place in Capernaum in Galilee. Luke notes that a number of religious officials were present at the occasion, including some from Jerusalem who were probably the most influential. These were not local religious officials from Capernaum or surrounding areas...this was all of the religious leaders from around Israel.

- "...the power of the Lord" - *dunamis*, "spiritual ability" is unique to Luke; he used *dunamis* on several occasions to describe Jesus' healing (Luke 4:36; 6:19; 8:46).

- This shows that the power of God was extrinsic to Jesus (Cf. John 5:1-19). Jesus did not perform miracles out of His divine nature. He laid those powers aside at the Incarnation. Rather, He did His miracles in the power of God's Spirit—who was on Him and in Him—as a Prophet.

- Luke would not say "the power of the Lord was present to heal him" if Jesus could heal at any time, under any condition, and solely at His own discretion.

- In Acts, Luke stressed that the same Spirit is on and in every believer today, and He is the source of our power as He was the source of Jesus' power.

### **Convention in Capernaum**

Why are all these Jewish leaders suddenly having a convention in Capernaum? This was their response to the first messianic miracle. They knew that Jesus healed a leper.

According to their own teachings, only the Messiah would be able to heal a leper. If He healed a leper, it could very well mean that He was the Messiah. They all came together to investigate Him.

According to Sanhedrin law, if there was any kind of messianic movement, the Sanhedrin had to investigate the situation in two stages. The first stage was called the "stage of observation." A delegation was formed to investigate only by way of observation. They had to observe: what was being said; what was being done; and what was being taught. They were not permitted to ask any questions or raise any objections. After a period of observation, they were to return to Jerusalem, report to the Sanhedrin and give a verdict: was the movement significant or was the movement insignificant? If the movement was decreed to be insignificant, the matter would be dropped.

But if the movement was declared to be significant, there would then be a second stage of investigation called the "stage of interrogation." In this stage, they would interrogate the individual or members of the movement. This time they would ask questions and raise objections to discover whether the claims should be accepted or rejected. This incident in Luke 5:17 records the first stage, the stage of observation. They were there to observe what Jesus was saying and doing. At this point, they were not allowed to raise objections or ask questions. So because a messianic miracle had been performed, all the leaders from all over the country had come to Capernaum to participate in the stage of observation, to observe what Yeshua was saying, doing and teaching.

### **Jesus Heals a Man with Palsy**

18 And *some* men were carrying a man on a stretcher who was paralyzed; and they were trying to bring him in and to set him down in front of Him.

18 And *some* men were carrying on a bed a man who was paralyzed; and they were trying to bring him in and to set him down in front of Him.

18 Some men were bringing a paralyzed man on a stretcher. They were trying to take him into the house and place him in front of Jesus.

18 And, behold, men brought in a bed a man which was taken with a palsy: and they sought *means* to bring him in, and to lay *him* before him.

- This event happened in Capernaum (Mark 2:1)

19 But when they did not find any *way* to bring him in because of the crowd, they went up on the roof and let him down through the tiles with his stretcher, into the middle *of the crowd*, in front of Jesus.

19 But not finding any *way* to bring him in because of the crowd, they went up on the roof and let him down through the tiles with his stretcher, into the middle *of the crowd*, in front of Jesus.

19 When they couldn't find a way to get him in because of the crowd, they went up on the roof and let him down on his stretcher through the tiles into the middle of the room, right in front of Jesus.

19 And when they could not find by what *way* they might bring him in because of the multitude, they went upon the housetop, and let him down through the tiling with *his* couch into the midst before Jesus.

- The religious leaders "convention," to observe Jesus for the purpose of making a judgment, were blocking the doorway so they couldn't enter the house to see Jesus.

- The zeal with which the four friends of the paralytic sought to bring him to Jesus demonstrated their faith that Jesus could heal him.

— The sick man also appears to have had faith, or he would not have permitted his friends to do what they did.

20 And seeing their faith, He said, "**Friend, your sins are forgiven you.**"

20 Seeing their faith, He said, "**Friend, your sins are forgiven you.**"

20 When Jesus saw their faith, he said, "**Mister, your sins are forgiven.**"

**20** And when he saw their faith, he said unto him, **Man, thy sins are forgiven thee.**

- "...your sins are forgiven" - for this healing, Jesus departed from His normal procedure of simply healing the sick. In this case, He first forgave the man's sins, then healed him.

— Jesus knew there would be a negative reaction to this from the religious leaders.

— Mark 2:6-7 says that some of the scribes reasoned in their hearts that Jesus was committing blasphemy. Since this was only the "observation stage," they couldn't say anything.

- Vital argument: Luke's point was that Jesus had the authority to call disciples, including people (such as Levi) who were not thought of as being righteous (v27-39).

— He's baiting them. The religious authorities know that only God can forgive sins, and so are upset at what they are hearing.

21 The scribes and the Pharisees began thinking of the implications, saying, "Who is this *man* who speaks blasphemies? Who can forgive sins, except God alone?"

21 The scribes and the Pharisees began to reason, saying, "Who is this *man* who speaks blasphemies? Who can forgive sins, but God alone?"

21 The scribes and the Pharisees began to argue among themselves, saying, "Who is this man who is uttering blasphemies? Who can forgive sins but God alone?"

**21** And the scribes and the Pharisees began to reason, saying, Who is this which speaketh blasphemies? Who can forgive sins, but God alone?

- The religious leaders correctly saw these terms as terms only to be used by God (Luke 7:49), since only God can forgive sin.

— Such an assault on the name of God was punishable by death (Cf. Lev 24:10-11,14-16,23)

— Jesus pointed out that the religious leaders were absolutely right: His subsequent healing of the man was incontrovertible proof that He did have the authority to forgive sins and therefore *should be accepted as God*.

22 But Jesus, aware of their thoughts, responded and said to them, "**Why are you thinking this way in your hearts?**"

22 But Jesus, aware of their reasonings, answered and said to them, "**Why are you reasoning in your hearts?**"

22 Because Jesus knew that they were arguing, he asked them, **"Why are you arguing about this among yourselves?"**

22 But when Jesus perceived their thoughts, he answering said unto them, **What reason ye in your hearts?**

23 **Which is easier, to say: 'Your sins are forgiven you,' or to say, 'Get up and walk'?**

23 **Which is easier, to say, 'Your sins have been forgiven you,' or to say, 'Get up and walk'?**

23 **Which is easier: to say, 'Your sins are forgiven,' or to say, 'Get up and walk'?**

23 **Whether is easier, to say, Thy sins be forgiven thee; or to say, Rise up and walk?**

- The easier thing to say was, "Your sins are forgiven" because that required no tangible, external and observable evidence (Cf. Matt 9:5-9; Mark 2:8-12). No one could disprove the claim.

— To state that a palsied man was going to be healed was a harder thing to say because that did require external and observable evidence. It was easy to disprove.

Jesus goes on to say (v10-12) that He was going to prove that He could say the easier "Your sins are forgiven" by performing the harder, healing the palsied man. He proceeded to heal the palsied man. There was instantaneous, observable evidence, because the man was able to stand up, walk around, and even carry his own bed. Doing the more difficult (healing the man) proved that Jesus could say (and do) the easier, that this man's sins were also forgiven. If Jesus could forgive sins, then it meant that He was who He claimed to be: the Messiah.

24 **But so that you may know that the Son of Man has authority on earth to forgive sins,"** He said to the man who was paralyzed, **"I say to you, get up, and pick up your stretcher, and go home."**

24 **But, so that you may know that the Son of Man has authority on earth to forgive sins,"—** He said to the paralytic—"I say to you, get up, and pick up your stretcher and go home."

24 **But so you'll know that the Son of Man has authority on earth to forgive sins..."** he told the paralyzed man, **"I say to you: Get up, pick up your stretcher, and go home!"**

24 **But that ye may know that the Son of man hath power upon earth to forgive sins, (he said unto the sick of the palsy,) I say unto thee, Arise, and take up thy couch, and go into thine house.**

- "...Son of Man" - this is the first use of "Son of Man" in Luke (23x in Luke; 82x in the Gospels)

— He didn't finish His sentence to the leaders; He turned to the sick man and finished the idea

— Jesus did the apparently more difficult thing in order to prove that He could also do the apparently easier thing

25 And immediately he got up before them, and **picked up what he had been lying on**, and went home glorifying God.

25 Immediately he got up before them, and picked up what he had been lying on, and went home glorifying God.

25 So the man immediately stood up in front of them and picked up what he had been lying on. Then he went home, praising God.

**25** And immediately he rose up before them, and took up that whereon he lay, and departed to his own house, glorifying God.

- "...picked up what he had been lying on" - the stretcher had carried the man (to the house, then from the ground to the top of the roof, then down into the house); now the man carried the stretcher.

— The ability of the paralyzed man to resume his walk of life is a picture of what Jesus does when He saves. His message is a liberating one.

26 And they were all struck with astonishment and *began* glorifying God. They were also filled with fear, saying, "We have seen **remarkable things today!**"

26 They were all struck with astonishment and *began* glorifying God; and they were filled with fear, saying, "We have seen remarkable things today."

26 Amazement seized all the people, and they began to praise God. They were filled with fear and declared, "We have seen wonderful things today!"

26 And they were all amazed, and they glorified God, and were filled with fear, saying, We have seen strange things to day.

- "...remarkable things" - *paradoxos*, paradoxes: *para*, against; *doxa*, opinion, view

- Jesus' authority is the issue here; evident from:

- His sinless life (John 8:29,46)
- His atonement (2 Cor 5:21; Gal 3:10-13)
- His eternal priesthood (Heb 7:25-26)

- "...today" - the "day" of the Messiah had arrived (Cf. 4:21), and the witnesses of this miracle testified to it, albeit unknowingly.

In response to the first messianic miracle of the healing of a leper, the intensive investigation of His messianic claims began. The leaders observed Jesus claiming the right to forgive sins. Therefore, He was either a blasphemer or the Messiah. The leadership of Israel would return to Jerusalem and decree the movement of Jesus as significant.

After this event, Jesus began undergoing the second stage of the Sanhedrin investigation, the stage of interrogation. Between the performance of the first messianic miracle and the second messianic miracle, everywhere Jesus went a Pharisee was sure to follow. This time, they were no longer silent. Everywhere He went, a Pharisee was always there asking questions or raising objections. They were trying to find a basis for rejecting or accepting His messianic claims.

(B) Fellowshiping with the sinners (5:27-32) (Cf. Matt 9:10-13; Mark 2:15-17)

**27** After that He went out and looked at a tax collector named Levi sitting in the tax office, and He said to him, "Follow Me."

**27** After that He went out and noticed a tax collector named Levi sitting in the tax booth, and He said to him, "Follow Me."

**27** After that, Jesus went out and saw a tax collector named Levi sitting at the tax collector's desk. He told him, "Follow me!"

**27** And after these things he went forth, and saw a publican, named Levi, sitting at the receipt of custom: and he said unto him, Follow me.

- The call of Levi was the culmination of the previous two miracles. Jesus had shown that He had the authority to make a person ceremonially clean and to forgive sins; Now those two authorities were brought to bear on one who was to become His disciple.

— Luke did not mention Levi's duties as a tax collector. He was sitting at the place of toll, the customs house (Matt 9:9)

— The Romans collected taxes through a system called "tax farming": they assessed a fixed tax figure and then sold the right to collect them to the highest bidder. The buyer then had to hand over the assessed figure at the end of the year and could keep any excess. This invited extortion.

### **The Call of Matthew (Cf. Matt 9:9; Mark 2:13-14; Luke 5:27-28)**

The call of Levi was the culmination of the previous two miracles: the cleansing of the leper and the man taken with palsy. Jesus had demonstrated His authority to make a person ceremonially clean and to forgive sins. Now those two authorities were brought to bear on one who was to become His disciple.

Luke portrayed Jesus bestowing messianic grace on a variety of people: a demoniac, a leper, a paralytic, and now a tax collector. He liberated them from a maligned spirit, lifelong uncleanness, a physical handicap, and now social ostracism and materialism. In the case of Levi (Matthew), Jesus not only provided forgiveness, but also fellowship with Himself.

There were additional taxes as well. Duties and tolls were collected from using roads, docking in harbors, and other import and export duties. (There was even a cart tax, by the wheel!)



Levi as a Tax Collector: He was probably collecting tolls from the boats on the seashore; an employee of Herod, a vassal of Rome. His position alienated him from the religious community of his day. He would have been excommunicated from the synagogue and could not serve as a witness in court. He was regarded as a "low life."

Jesus gave him a new name: Matthew, "Gift of God" (Luke 6:15; Matt 9:9). Matthew knew shorthand—*Tachygráphos*: shorthand writer in Graeco-Roman World. Matthew would have thus been able to transcribe the Sermon on the Mount *verbatim*!

28 And he **left everything** behind, and got up and ***began following Him***.

28 And he left everything behind, and got up and *began* to follow Him.

28 So Levi left everything behind, got up, and followed him.

28 And he left all, rose up, and followed him.

- "...left everything" - (aorist participle) He made a definitive break from his old life.

- "...*began following Him*" - (imperfect indicative) a continuous pattern of life. The break was a once and for all thing, the following was a continuing thing.

— Matthew had grown weary of collecting revenue from a reluctant population, and was glad to follow One who had come to take burdens off instead of laying them on, to remit debts instead of exacting them.

**29 And Levi gave a big reception** for Him in his house; and there was a large crowd of **taxcollectors** and other *people* who were reclining *at the table* with them.

**29** And Levi gave a big reception for Him in his house; and there was a great crowd of tax collectors and other *people* who were reclining *at the table* with them.

**29** Later, Levi gave a large banquet at his home for Jesus. A large crowd of tax collectors and others were eating with them.

**29** And Levi made him a great feast in his own house: and there was a great company of publicans and of others that sat down with them.

- "...Levi gave a big reception" - his first act was to throw a party!

- "...tax collectors" - that was probably the only fellowship he had; "Birds of a feather flock together"

30 The Pharisees and their scribes *began* grumbling to His disciples, saying, "Why do you eat and drink with the tax collectors and sinners?"

30 The Pharisees and their scribes *began* grumbling at His disciples, saying, "Why do you eat and drink with the tax collectors and sinners?"

30 The Pharisees and their scribes started complaining to Jesus' disciples, "Why do you eat and drink with tax collectors and sinners?"

30 But their scribes and Pharisees murmured against his disciples, saying, Why do ye eat and drink with publicans and sinners?

- The joy of Matthew (Levi) is contrasted by the grumbling of the scribes and Pharisees

31 And Jesus answered and said to them, "*It is not those who are healthy who need a physician, but those who are sick.*"

31 And Jesus answered and said to them, "*It is not those who are well who need a physician, but those who are sick.*"

31 But Jesus answered them, "*Healthy people don't need a physician, but sick people do.*"

**31** And Jesus answering said unto them, *They that are whole need not a physician; but they that are sick.*

32 *I have not come to call the righteous to repentance, but sinners."*

32 *I have not come to call the righteous but sinners to repentance."*

32 *I have not come to call righteous people, but sinners, to repentance."*

32 *I came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance.*

- Here Jesus was not concerned about discussing who were "the righteous." His point was simply that His mission was to those in need of "repentance"—a change of heart and a change of life (Cf. Matt 20:28; Luke 3:7-14; 19:10; John 3:17; 10:17-18; Heb 10:5-6)

— The Pharisees did not sense their need to change. They had no concern for the sinners and actually distanced themselves from God. They should have read their own Scriptures.

- Here repentance is evidently a synonym for faith (or salvation through faith). The whole tenor of Jesus' ministry was to call men to faith in the gospel, thus He says, "Repent and believe in the gospel" (Mark 1:15).

— Jesus here is not looking at belief and repentance as separate things, but as simultaneous things. See notes on Acts 2:38.

(C) Not fasting (5:33-39) (Cf. Matt 9:14-17; Mark 2:18-22)

**33** And they said to Him, "The disciples of John often fast and offer prayers, the *disciples* of the Pharisees also do the same, but Yours eat and drink."

**33** And they said to Him, "The disciples of John often fast and offer prayers, the *disciples* of the Pharisees also do the same, but Yours eat and drink."

**33** Then they told him, "John's disciples frequently fast and pray, and so do those of the Pharisees. But your disciples keep right on eating and drinking."

**33** And they said unto him, Why do the disciples of John fast often, and make prayers, and likewise *the disciples* of the Pharisees; but thine eat and drink?

- The OT only required one day of fasting (the Day of Atonement, Lev 16:29), but over the years additional fasts became traditional.

— The Pharisees said godly people should fast 2x a week (Mondays and Thursdays, Cf. 18:12), as well as on four other days in memory of Jerusalem's destruction (Zech 7:3,5;

8:19).

— Jesus did not oppose fasting, but He criticized its abuse (4:2; 22:16,18; Matt 6:16-18)

- They raised this question because fasting was another practice, besides eating with sinners, that marked Jesus and His disciples as unusual (Cf. 7:34).

— Since Jesus preached repentance (v32), they questioned why did He not expect His followers to demonstrate the accepted signs that indicated it.

34 And Jesus said to them, "You cannot make the attendants of the groom fast while the groom is with them, can you?"

34 And Jesus said to them, "You cannot make the attendants of the bridegroom fast while the bridegroom is with them, can you?"

34 But Jesus told them, "You can't force the wedding guests to fast while the groom is still with them, can you?"

34 And he said unto them, Can ye make the children of the bridechamber fast, while the bridegroom is with them?

- Jesus compared the situation to a wedding; He was the "bridegroom" who had come to claim His bride, Israel (Cf. Is 54:5-8; 62:5; Jer 2:2; Hosea 2:19-20,23; Ezek 16).

— The disciples were His "friends" (attendants) who rejoiced at this prospect with Him, therefore to compel them to "fast" was inappropriate.

35 But *the days will come*; and when the groom is **taken away** from them, then they will fast in those days."

35 But *the days will come*; and when the bridegroom is taken away from them, then they will fast in those days."

35 But the time will come when the groom will be taken away from them, and at that time they will fast."

35 But the days will come, when the bridegroom shall be taken away from them, and then shall they fast in those days.

- "...taken away" - *apairo*, taken away by force, violently! Daniel, and David in Psalms, both told about the violent death of the Messiah.

— Since the bridegroom would die (be "taken away"), then His disciples would fast.

36 And He was also telling them a parable: "No one tears a piece of cloth from a new garment and puts it on an old garment; otherwise he will both tear the new, and the patch from the new *garment* will not match the old.

36 And He was also telling them a parable: "No one tears a piece of cloth from a new garment and puts it on an old garment; otherwise he will both tear the new, and the piece from the new will not match the old.

36 Then he told them a parable: "No one tears a piece of cloth from a new garment and sews it on an old garment. If he does, the new cloth will tear, and the piece from the new won't match the old.

**36** And he spake also a parable unto them; No man putteth a piece of a new garment upon an old; if otherwise, then both the new maketh a rent, and the piece that was *taken* out of the new agreeth not with the old.

- Jesus next illustrated with parables the fact that His coming introduced a radical break with former religious customer. He did not come to patch the holes in Judaism, but to inaugurate a new order.

— Had Israel accepted Jesus, this new order would have been the messianic kingdom, but since the Jews rejected Him, it became the Church. Eventually, it will become the messianic kingdom.

— Simply adding His new order to Judaism would have two detrimental effects:

(1) It would have damaged the "new" order

(2) It would not preserve the "old" order

— Only Luke's account includes the first effect, that it would damage the new order. Luke included this to help his Christian reader understand that Israel and the Church are distinct.

— Mark's gospel covers the deficiencies of Judaism cannot be mended simply by a Christian "patch"; in Luke's gospel, the emphasis is on the impossibility of trying to graft something Christian onto Judaism.

37 And no one pours new wine into old wineskins; otherwise the new wine will burst the skins and it will be spilled out, and the skins will be ruined.

37 And no one puts new wine into old wineskins; otherwise the new wine will burst the skins and it will be spilled out, and the skins will be ruined.

37 And no one pours new wine into old wineskins. If he does, the new wine will make the skins burst, the wine will be spilled, and the skins will be ruined.

37 And no man putteth new wine into old bottles [skins]; else the new wine will burst the bottles [skins], and be spilled, and the bottles shall perish.

- Jesus' second illustration adds the fact that the new order that He came to bring has an inherently expanding and potentially explosive quality

— Christianity would expand to the whole world; Judaism simply could not contain what Jesus was bringing, since it had become too rigid due to centuries of accumulated tradition.

38 But new wine must be put into fresh wineskins.

38 But new wine must be put into fresh wineskins.

38 **Instead, new wine is to be poured into fresh wineskins.**

38 **But new wine must be put into new bottles; and both are preserved.**

- New wine would not burst old skins without fermenting. It wasn't grape juice, it was wine.
- Grapes are harvested in the fall (there was no refrigeration in Israel)
- At the wedding in Cana, he made the "best wine." He was showing them that he was Lord even of the Temple. It was ceremonial water that was set aside for purification purposes.
- If you take the plain meaning of the text, the new wine has to ferment to become old wine. "The old is better."

Jesus' response was that the new way (His way) and the old way (the way of John and the Pharisees) simply do not mix. He gave three examples:

(1) A bridegroom's guests do not fast while he is with them because it is a joyous occasion. They fast after he is gone (John 3:29).

(2) A new unshrunk patch of cloth is not put on an old garment because it will shrink and the tear will be worse.

(3) New wine is not put into old wineskins for as it ferments it will break the old skins, which have lost their elasticity, and both the wine and the skins will be ruined.

39 **And no one, after drinking old *wine* wants new; for he says, 'The old is fine.'"**

39 **And no one, after drinking old *wine* wishes for new; for he says, 'The old is good enough.'"**

39 **No one who has been drinking old wine wants new wine, because he says, 'The old wine is good enough!'"**

39 **No man also having drunk old *wine* straightway desireth new: for he saith, The old is better.**

- Jesus' point was that most people who have grown accustomed to the old order are content with it, and do not prefer the new. They tend to assume that the old order is better because it is old.

— This was particularly true of the Jewish religious leaders, who regarded Jesus' new teaching as "new," and inferior to what was old.

— In religious people, there is a kind of passion for the old. Nothing moves more slowly than a Church...

— We should never be afraid of new methods. That a thing has always been done may very well be the best reason for stopping doing it. That a thing has never been done may very well be the best reason for trying it.