

The Answerer

Answering children's questions

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Getting let down through the roof!

Mark 2:1-12

This could have been me - I am a paralytic (paraplegic).

But in Bible times there were no wheelchairs, so this guy may have just sat - or had been carried around by friends since he was very young boy.

These friends must have heard that Jesus - the guy who can heal sick people - was close by in their town called Capernaum. "Well let's go and see if this Jesus can make our mate to be able to get up and walk?"

True mates indeed - they really cared about him.

Well they got to the house where Jesus was inside and had to put their friend Caleb (let's call him Caleb because the Bible does not give him a name) on the ground and have a think. The place was packed and overflowing with even the courtyard full of people so there was no hope of getting Caleb close to Jesus.

Well they were not idle thinkers - they were *creative thinkers!*



Now here, I must explain that in bible times there were no truckloads of bricks, no cement tiles, baked clay tiles, no 'Colorbond' (painted corrugated steel sheets) for roofs and no 'modern' roofing. Houses were made with mostly mud brick walls, sandstone sometimes and real stones if you were rich. Tall trees were scarce, so tree trunks and branches and brushwood were laid across the house walls or maybe woven matting. Then mud or plaster from local materials that would set hard was used to cover the tree 'beams.' It could be made quite strong and of course thick, so good it would be strong enough to walk on. Most walls were only two or three metres apart because of lack of long timber.

So it was to a house filled with people that came the paralytic man carried on a mat by his friends. Thinking very creatively the boys climbed up on the roof and simply dug a hole through the roof above where Jesus was standing.

Most houses had external steps up to the roof. Dean Farrar suggests that there may have been tiles that could be moved and some houses had access holes in the roof.

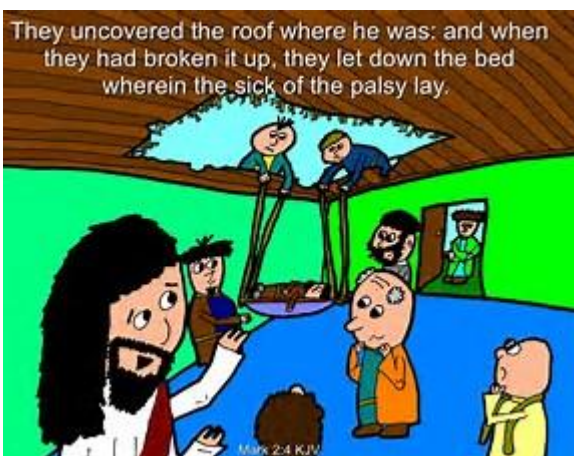
The paralytic was then lowered down at the feet of Jesus. (I am sure he would have held tightly onto the mat). *I would have!*

Jesus was pleased with their belief (faith) that he could heal the paralytic.



Jesus spoke first: “Son, your sins are forgiven.” Jesus’ ‘Non-friends’ heard this and looked at one another and *thought* “Who does he think he is - only God can forgive sins?” They thought it - but did not say it. But Jesus knew what they were thinking. So he challenged them as to whether it was easier to say: “Get up and walk” or say: “Your sins are forgiven.”

Jesus did the miracle to: “let you know that the ‘Son of Man’ has authority to do such things.”



Then Jesus said to the paralytic: “I tell you, take up your mat and go home.”

Well he did that and as he walked away many people said: “We have seen amazing things today.”

They surely had, and the ‘Non-friends’ of Jesus could do nothing to stop him doing more of it later, which Jesus did continue to do. *Lots!*