

Luke 5a: HG Bishop Youssef

His Grace Bishop Youssef ~ فسوي ابن الالة فاين تاطع • LUKE 5: 1 - 26 ~ Bible Study

Outline of the Chapter

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- 1-11: Jesus calls Galilean fishermen to be His disciples
- 12-16: Jesus cleanses the leper
- 17-26: Jesus forgives and heals a paralytic
- 27-32: Jesus calls a tax collector
- 33-39 Jesus is questioned about fasting

Jesus Calls Galilean Fishermen to be Disciples

¹ So it was, as the multitude pressed about Him to hear the word of God, that He stood by the Lake of Gennesaret, ² and saw two boats standing by the lake; but the fishermen had gone from them and were washing *their* nets. ³ Then He got into one of the boats, which was Simon's, and asked him to put out a little from the land. And He sat down and taught the multitudes from the boat.

- By now the Lord Jesus has some fame and wherever he goes he attracts listeners
 - Whether in synagogue, marketplace, houses, etc. Crowds attract
- St Luke only one who calls it Sea of Gennesaret. Same as Lake of Tiberias or Sea of Galilee.
 - Gennesaret on one side, Tiberias on another.
 - Book of Numbers we read about Lake of Chinnereth (Numbers 34:11)
 - John calls it Sea of Tiberias John 6:1
- Galilean fishermen would fish at night and return to shore at sunrise to unload catch and restore their nets.
- The Lord asked Simon for use of his boat as a platform from which to address the large crowd.
 - He had already healed his Mother In Law, so there is some relation between them and some familiarity
 - He couldn't conveniently speak to them on the land because they crowded around them so He went in boat and pulled back.
- According to Mark 1:16-20, Simon and Andrew were fishermen and partners with Zebedee and his sons James and John
- Sat down to teach is a symbol of His authority

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

⁵ But Simon answered and said to Him, "Master, we have toiled all night and caught nothing; nevertheless at Your word I will let down the net." ⁶ And when they had done this, they caught a great number of fish, and their net was breaking. ⁷ So they signaled to *their* partners in the other boat to come and help them. And they came and filled both the boats, so that they began to sink. ⁸ When Simon Peter saw *it*, he fell down at Jesus' knees, saying, "Depart from me, for I am a sinful man, O Lord!"

⁹ For he and all who were with him were astonished at the catch of fish which they had taken; ¹⁰ and so also were James and John, the sons of Zebedee, who were partners with Simon. And Jesus said to Simon, "Do not be afraid. From now on you will catch men." ¹¹ So when they had brought their boats to land, they ^{1a}forsook all and followed Him.

- The Lord, knowing they had caught nothing, asked them to go to the deep and drop their net. Their failure to catch fish the night before was God's Providence - He allowed them a temporary failure so that they could give permanent and eternal success and see God's hand the next day.

If anyone else had given them that advice to lower their nets, they would have considered it offensive to their self respect - they are experienced!

According to their experience, there is no reason to cast their nets again. But Peter because of his faith, trusts in the word of the Lord. He already saw the Lord heal his MIL so he knows he's not speaking with a regular man or an eloquent teacher but that this Man has some divine power

They knew

- fishing should be at shallow waters not in the deep
- fishing is better at night not during the day

"according to Your word I will cast down the net"

St Ambrose says that Simon Peter's struggle all night long but without fruit is as one who preaches in human wisdom and philosophy. The people of God should preach in the power of the Spirit not in human wisdom and philosophy

- The amount of fish was a miracle in itself
 - Had to call another boat
 - two boats started sinking
 - filled both boats
 - net started to break

If we all readily obey the Lord we'll be blessed in the same manner.

St Cyril: their nets were filled with fish miraculously. This is to give them confidence that

their preaching will not be in vain when casting their nets on the unbelievers and the lost. But notice how Simon Peter and the others stood in fear and asked for help. There were many who helped the apostles in their missionary work.

In ministry we need to work as a team not as individuals

- Peter at the beginning of the day heard the teaching of Christ and it pierced his heart. The conviction of sin started in his heart with the teaching, and after seeing the miracle he fell at the knees of Christ. He saw the power of Christ and worshipped Him in amazement and gratitude.

This is the reaction of Isaiah in Isaiah 6:1-10

Depart from me is an expression of humility. He felt unworthy to have Christ in his boat. He is a Holy Being.

He recognized the vast difference between his human condition as a sinner and the Holy One of God

- Do not be afraid - repeated several times in scripture (Isaiah 6, Daniel 10, several during ministry of Christ, before ascension)

From now on - end of old life and beginning of new life as an apostle and messenger of Christ. And he took the new name of Peter.

The Lord compares the catch of fish with the catch of souls that Simon Peter will win (first sermon after Pentecost wins 3000 souls). This night of unproductive human work will be replaced by fruitful work of proclaiming the Gospel under Jesus' authority

Fisher of men is prophetic symbol for proclaiming the good news of salvation to everyone in the world

Andrew (named in Matthew 4:18), Simon, James and John left all to follow Christ. This is the beginning of Jesus' community of believers

The fishermen made the same choice that Jesus asks each one of us to make - to leave everything in our earthly life behind and follow Him

Jesus Cleanses the Leper

¹² And it happened when He was in a certain city, that behold, a man who was full of leprosy saw Jesus; and he fell on *his* face and implored Him, saying, "Lord, if You are willing, You can make me clean."

¹³ Then He put out *His* hand and touched him, saying, "I am willing; be cleansed." Immediately the leprosy left him. ¹⁴ And He charged him to tell no one, "But go and show yourself to the priest, and

make an offering for your cleansing, as a testimony to them, just as Moses commanded.”

¹⁵ However, the report went around concerning Him all the more; and great multitudes came together to hear, and to be healed by Him of their infirmities. ¹⁶ So He Himself *often* withdrew into the wilderness and prayed.

- St Luke was a physician so he is accurate in describing medical conditions. Full of leprosy means it had covered his body

The man makes a statement of faith

- This is memorable because it's the first recorded instance of Jesus contact with leprosy which was very contagious and lethal

If you are willing - he is not demanding but saying "I have faith that you can, but I leave it to your will"

Leviticus 13:46, Numbers 5:2 - touching leprosy makes you unclean medically and ceremonially. Touching the leper is a clear violation of the letter of the law, but bit the spirit of the law.

Ambrose - Jesus because He is the Lord of the law, does not obey the Law but makes the law.

Why did He touch the leper?

- it's not just a physical illness but also psychological and spiritual. By touching him, He tells him "you are accepted. You are love"
- He is not infected by the leprosy symbolizing how He took our humanity yet remaining undefiled (resembles us in everything except for sin alone)
- The Lord was not polluted by the touch but the leper was cleansed
- Why did He tell him not to tell anyone
 - 1 - Matthew 12:15-50 the Lord didn't want His ministry to be accompanied by excitement and trouble from the religious leader. His house did not yet come. He wants to build up the kingdom of God.
 - 2 - He came not merely to be a Great Physician and Wonder Worker but to save our souls by His revelation, His example, His death
 - 3 - So that the man is readmitted to the community according to the Law of Moses. This requires a priest to pronounce him ritually clean
 - 4 - it is evident that His word was neglected since the report spread. Maybe a feeling of gratitude... But now His work of teaching is hindered as many came to be healed.
- St Luke stresses Jesus life of prayer and many parables about prayer

Jesus Forgives and Heals the Paralytic

¹⁷ Now it happened on a certain day, as He was teaching, that there were Pharisees and teachers of the law sitting by, who had come out of every town of Galilee, Judea, and Jerusalem. And the power of the Lord was *present* to heal them. ¹⁸ Then behold, men brought on a bed a man who was paralyzed, whom they sought to bring in and lay before Him. ¹⁹ And when they could not find how they might bring him in, because of the crowd, they went up on the housetop and let him down with *his* bed through the tiling into the midst before Jesus.

²⁰ When He saw their faith, He said to him, "Man, your sins are forgiven you."

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

²² But when Jesus perceived their thoughts, He answered and said to them, "Why are you reasoning in your hearts? ²³ Which is easier, to say, 'Your sins are forgiven you,' or to say, 'Rise up and walk'? ²⁴ But that you may know that the Son of Man has power on earth to forgive sins"—He said to the man who was paralyzed, "I say to you, arise, take up your bed, and go to your house."

²⁵ Immediately he rose up before them, took up what he had been lying on, and departed to his own house, glorifying God. ²⁶ And they were all amazed, and they glorified God and were filled with fear, saying, "We have seen strange things today!"

- The Lord is still preaching around Galilee
People came from Galilee, Judea and Jerusalem
The fame of a New Teacher had spread

He is sitting in a house teaching but this time it's a different group of people. Not common fishermen or anything from Galilee... But pharisees and scribes and teachers of the law.

- Some came out of curiosity.
- Some for higher motives to hear for themselves the teachings of this new teacher.

We can't say yet that any came for a malicious reason or jealousy like at the end of His ministry.

The house is packed and no one can come in

- Not easy to carry a man up to the roof
 - When He saw their faith - can faith be seen? Work is seen. St James said "show me your faith by your works"
- The paralytic was so weak by his disease, but his friends had great determination. This persistence implied faith in the power of the Lord Jesus Christ to heal. Faith in the man and faith in his friends.

The Lord, seeing the faith of both, spoke these substantial words: "Your sins are forgiven"

- First use of the word faith in Gospel of Luke
- Maybe the Lord read this man's heart and that he was more distressed by his sins than

his body

- Maybe the man got this illness because of his sin and the Lord has to heal the spiritual before the physical
- He addressed the greatest problem the man has which is sin. Sin is the fountain of all sickness. Forgiveness of sin is the only foundation from which physical recovery can be built
- He forgives sins, and the healing of the sickness is undisputable proof that He has power to heal sins
- The friends show active intercession to God
- My faith can make a difference in someone else's life
- Who can forgive sins but God alone? The answer to this question is yes! Jesus is, indeed, God. This is a revelation that God became man to heal us not just from physical illness, but to heal humanity from sin and corruption

They accuse Him of speaking blasphemies

blasphemy: Abusive or condescending language directed to God or claiming that a person is God

Blasphemy was punishable by death (Lev 24:16) - this was even the charge by which the Lord was condemned in His trial before His crucifixion

Who are the Pharisees and Scribes?

- Pharisee means "separated one" because they separated themselves from anything they thought unholy or unclean and that everyone was separated from the love of God but themselves. They practiced a very strict and literal interpretation of the Law of Moses.
- Scribes were teachers who transcribed the scriptures and many were Pharisees

This incident is the beginning of their hostility to the Lord Jesus Christ and His ministry

In this passage, there is no doubt that Jesus is revealing Himself as God

- The prophecy in Luke 2:34 by Simeon is already being fulfilled - "This Child is destined for the fall and rising of many in Israel, and for a sign which will be spoken against that the thoughts of many hearts may be revealed"
- Thoughts of many hearts may be revealed

The Pharisees are in a dilemma here because either:

- Jesus is blaspheming by forgiving sins
- Jesus is actually God

They chose the former.

No man can forgive sins, and no man can heal paralysis... even today, it's one of the diseases that is very difficult to be completely cured.

So it's a logical assumption that if He has the power to heal paralysis, then He must have authority to forgive sins.

Which is easier?

Two ways to understand this question:

- It is harder to heal a man than to forgive sins because forgiveness is invisible and no one could verify in that moment that this man is forgiven before God. Anyone can say it... how can we know?

OR

- To heal the sickness of this man did not cost anything... just a few words from the mouth of the Lord. But to be able to forgive his sins, cost a lot... to empty Himself, to take the form of man, to obey unto the death of the cross, to suffer and shed His blood. "You were bought at a price; therefore glorify God in your body and in your spirit, which are God's" (1 Cor 6:20)

If he was healed, and his sins not forgiven... then it means nothing in the end. But if he's not healed and his sins are forgiven, he inherits the kingdom of God. But because of their doubt, He verifies for them that He has authority to forgive sins on earth.

- Jesus was willing to put Himself to the test in a way that is immediately visible
He corrects their understanding that He has power to do both heal and forgive sins

This is the first time the Lord used the title "Son of Man" about Himself

- Expresses both humanity and divinity
- These religious leaders knew Daniel 7:13 that says the Messiah will be called Son of Man
- Messianic title
- If he used the word King or Christ, it will sound to the Romans like an earthly king

Imagine the tension in this scene:

- Scribes/Pharisees tense because they are challenged by Him
- Paralytic is tense wondering if he'll be healed or not
- Crowd is tense to see what happens

When he hears this word, he immediately rose up. He carried the bed which had carried him. The bed which was proof of his sickness, became proof of his cure when he carried it. Jesus' power to heal and authority over sin is immediately vindicated and everyone glorified God.

The Scribes and Pharisees don't reach the same conclusion

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