

GOSPEL PEARLS

Do we understand what this means?

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Jesus was teaching one day, and among the audience there were Pharisees and doctors of the Law who had come from every village in Galilee, from Judaea and from Jerusalem. And the Power of the Lord was behind his works of healing. Then some men appeared, carrying on a bed a paralysed man whom they were trying to bring in and lay down in front of him. But as the crowd made it impossible to find a way of getting him in, they went up on to the flat roof and lowered him and his stretcher down through the tiles into the middle of the gathering, in front of Jesus. Seeing their faith he said,

'My friend, your sins are forgiven you.' The scribes and the Pharisees began to think this over. 'Who is this man talking blasphemy? Who can forgive sins but God alone?' But Jesus, aware of their thoughts, made them this reply, 'What are these thoughts you have in your hearts? Which of these is easier: to say, "Your sins are forgiven you" or to say, "Get up and walk"? But to prove to you that the Son of Man has authority on earth to forgive sins,' – he said to the paralysed man – 'I order you: get up, and pick up your stretcher and go home.'
And immediately before their very eyes he got up, picked up what he had been lying on and went home praising God. They were all astounded and praised God, and were filled with awe, saying, 'We have seen strange things today.' (Luke 5:17-26)

The paralytic is healed by Jesus, not only for his faith but also due the faith of those who brought him to Jesus, by rectifying his physical inability to move. Before this healing, however, Jesus highlights the prevailing importance of faith in Him to obtain the remission of sins. Diseases and their effects can come and go but if we arrive in the presence of God, on the day of our death, without being ready, that is without having asked for our sins to be forgiven, we will be forever separated from God. Do you realise how long eternity without God really is? It never ends.