

**What Kind of Man is This? Lord of Judgement**  
**From the Series, “The King and I – Matthew Tells Us About the King of the Universe”**  
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**Introduction**

Today, we’re going to talk about judgement. What kinds of things come to your mind when you think about the word “Judgement?”

To some, judgement refers to the way that we think about things. What kind of judgement do we show when we face problems? Good judgement, or bad judgement? Wise judgement, or foolish?



To some people, judgement is something that happens in a court of law. People are hurt in some way, and they go before a judge. There’s normally a victim of a wrong, and a person or group accused of perpetrating the wrong. Both sides present evidence. A judge listens then makes a judgement. He brings down his gavel and declares that the accused is guilty or innocent. If the verdict is “guilty”, the judge can declare the penalty.

For those who think about spiritual things, judgement can refer to an act of God. If someone has sinned, they may be punished in different ways. Maybe the judgement occurs in this life? Or maybe, the judgement occurs in the next life?

Judgement can involve all these things. Now here’s something you might not have thought about: If someone says the word, “judgement”, do you think about: A person with a handicap? Now, that’s something we don’t normally think about when we think of judgement.

We’re in our series, “The King and I – Matthew Tells Us About the King of the Universe.” We’re working our way systematically through the book of Matthew. We’re in a subseries with the title, “What Kind of Man is This?” Today, we’re going to read a story about a man with a handicap. He comes to Jesus to be healed. In Matthew’s book, others have done that, and others will follow. But for this man, Jesus does something different.

What kind of man is this? As we study this story, we’re going to learn that Jesus is: Lord of Judgement.

Let’s read:

1 Jesus stepped into a boat, crossed over and came to his own town. 2 Some men brought to him a paralyzed man, lying on a mat. When Jesus saw their faith, he said to the man, "Take heart, son; your sins are forgiven." (Matthew 9:1-2)

## I. Jesus Forgives Sins

As we look at this story, the first thing we're going to see is that Jesus forgives sins. If you've been in churches for any length of time, you know that. In fact, you've heard it many times - It's a big part of our message in the Christian church. ***But in those days, Jesus was not yet known for that.*** The story we're reading today is one of the first times he's made forgiveness a major emphasis of his ministry.

Let's learn more details: Jesus has just returned from a boat trip over the sea of Galilee. He has returned to a place called, "His own town." Although he was raised in Nazareth, we learned in Matthew chapter 4 that Jesus was now calling the city of Capernaum his home. Capernaum was a town on the northwest shore of the Sea of Galilee. That town was more central to travel in the region. Also, Peter had some family members who lived there.

In the story, we're told that some people brought a paralyzed man to Jesus. The man had to be carried on a mat, or a stretcher. Jesus, as the story goes, was impressed by their faith. What made Jesus so impressed?

The gospel writers Luke and Mark both tell this story as well. Let's get an important detail from Mark:

2 And many were gathered together, so that there was no more room, not even at the door. And he was preaching the word to them. 3 And they came, bringing to him a paralytic carried by four men. (Mark 2:2-4)

If you recall in our last few sessions, we learned that Jesus was not always happy with big crowds. Here we can see why. Jesus often taught outdoors, but sometimes you have to come inside. This led to a crowded room. Imagine the scene: People are packed like sardines. There's an overflow going out the door.

What kind of people were there? Luke tells us that:

17 On one of those days, as he was teaching, Pharisees and teachers of the law were sitting there, who had come from every village of Galilee and Judea and from Jerusalem. (Luke 5:17)

So, we have a crowded room. We have people from all over the country of Israel. Pharisees, teachers of the law. In that culture, these were ***important*** people.

While this is going on, some men bring a man who is paralyzed. He can't move at all, so he has to be carried. Today, we have all kinds of ways to help people with handicaps. We can help them to lead meaningful lives. Not in those days. This man could do nothing. So, unlike everyone else at the gathering, he was decidedly unimportant. Fortunately for him, his friends didn't think so.

This man must have had some very dedicated friends - They thought he was very important. We don't know how far they had to travel with their friend. It might have been quite a distance. Whatever it was, they had to carry him the entire way. And, to them, the trip was worth it.

So, imagine this: We have a man who has suffered, perhaps for a long time. He's paralyzed. Every day, his friends watch him waste away. Then, they all hear that there is a man named Jesus. He can heal people from terrible afflictions. So, this little band puts together a stretcher, and they carry their friend. Then, they reach the place where Jesus is teaching. They all must have been excited - Very excited. Years of suffering are about to be gone. But then, as they get to the building where Jesus is, they find out they can't get in. It's too crowded. The door is blocked. Maybe they ask if they can get in. However, some self-appointed door keeper tells them to go away - Only **important people** get to see Jesus on that day.

In the modern world, men aren't supposed to cry. In the ancient world, there was no such rule. In the face of such horrible disappointment, it might have been tempting to weep.

If it was, these men didn't sit around for long - They had an idea.

4 And when they could not get near him because of the crowd, they removed the roof above him, and when they had made an opening, they let down the bed on which the paralytic lay. (Mark 2:4)

So we have a crowded room, with everyone listening to Jesus. In spite of the fact that it's crowded, it's very proper and orderly. Suddenly, one man notices some dust on his shoulder. He flicks it off and wonders where it came from. He looks to the left - He looks to the right. Then he makes the mistake of looking up - And he gets dust in his eye. Now everyone looks up. When they do, they see a hole forming in the roof. When the hole is big enough, a man on a stretcher is lowered into the room with ropes.

If you were sitting in that room, what would you be thinking? We could speculate on that one for a long time. But we know exactly what Jesus was thinking: He was thinking, "those men have faith."

What did they have faith in? They certainly had faith that Jesus could heal the paralyzed man. More than that, they had faith that Jesus was good. They had faith that Jesus would care. They had faith that Jesus would treat them as though they were just as important as anyone else in the room.

Apparently, there was one bit of faith that was especially held by the paralyzed man. You see, in those days, in ancient Israel, many people thought that there was a direct connection between sin and bad things happening in someone's life. We see an example of that over in John's gospel. He tells the following story:

1 As he went along, he saw a man blind from birth. 2 His disciples asked him, "Rabbi, who sinned, this man or his parents, that he was born blind?" 3 "Neither this man nor his parents sinned," said Jesus, "but this happened so that the works of God might be displayed in him. (John 9:1-3)

From this we can see that the idea of a direct relationship between sin and misfortune was a common misconception. In the minds of many, if someone was born blind, someone must have sinned. It may have been the parents, or it may have been the victim. Jesus was quick to point out that there is no such connection. However, it took a while for that fact to get out.

From this, we could guess that the man who was paralyzed may have been concerned. Maybe he thought, "Jesus will think I'm a sinner." We could go even further. Perhaps this man had a tender heart? Maybe it wasn't just what others might think. Maybe he was aware of sin in his life. In the minds of many in that day, a sinful heart would eliminate any chance he would have with a man so clearly righteous as Jesus.

But then, there was something about Jesus. Perhaps this man, the paralytic, had been in the crowd when Jesus presented his great manifesto just a few days before. Jesus started by teaching that the Kingdom of God belonged to the poor in spirit - People who were aware of their sin and spiritual bankruptcy before God. Jesus then said that those who mourn over their sin should be happy, because one day they would be comforted. He said that the meek were blessed, because they would inherit the earth.

It sure sounded like a poor man, a crippled man, a meek man, a sinful man, could come to Jesus for help. This man believed it. And his friends believed it. They had faith.

In other cases, when people asked Jesus for help, he gave it to them. But for this man, Jesus says something very special. When Jesus saw their faith, he said to the man, "Take heart son; your sins are forgiven."

These men had faith in Jesus. Faith that he had the power to heal. Faith that he was good, and that he would care about them. Faith that he would treat them as though they were as important as anyone in the room - ***And faith that he would forgive their sins.***

Why would Jesus forgive sins? Because he is the Lord of Judgement. When sinful people come to him, Jesus can do one of two things: He can declare guilt. He can declare guilt, and then declare forgiveness. As a note, he never declares, "Not guilty". We're taught in the Bible that all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God. (Romans 3:23)

## II. Why can Jesus forgive sins? (Why is he the Lord of Judgement?)

Now that we see how forgiveness comes to play in this story, let's ask a second question: Why can Jesus forgive sin? Why is he the Lord of Judgement? The men who were listening, the teachers and other officials, had problems with what Jesus just said.

3 At this, some of the teachers of the law said to themselves, "This fellow is blaspheming!" (Matthew 9:3)

We hear that word, "blasphemy" but we don't always stop to make sure we know what it means. It means to say or do something that shows contempt for God. It's the opposite of reverence, which is the proper attitude to have.

When Jesus announced that a man's sins were forgiven, something was obvious: It was obvious that **he** was the one doing the forgiving. To the teachers of the law, this was blasphemy. Once again, Mark tells us a little more:

6 Now some of the scribes were sitting there, questioning in their hearts, 7 "Why does this man speak like that? He is blaspheming! Who can forgive sins but God alone?" (Mark 2:6-7)

The scribes, the Pharisees, and the teachers of the Law, all received ongoing rebukes from Jesus because of their empty hearts. They distorted all kinds of things in the Word of God. Sometimes though, it was amazing how much they understood. They believed that Jesus, by forgiving sins, was doing something that only God could do. And you know what? That's right!

Let's read from the Psalms:

1 Have mercy on me, O God,  
according to your unfailing love;  
according to your great compassion  
blot out my transgressions.  
2 Wash away all my iniquity  
and cleanse me from my sin.  
(Psalm 51:1-2)

When King David, the writer of this psalm, felt a need to be forgiven, he cried out to God. He wanted God to have mercy on him. He wanted God to show compassion. He wanted God to wash away all his iniquity. Why did he call out to God for that? Let's read more:

3 For I know my transgressions,  
and my sin is always before me.  
4 Against you, you only, have I sinned  
and done what is evil in your sight;  
so you are right in your verdict  
and justified when you judge.  
(vs 3-4)

David said that sin was a matter between him and God - Not anyone else. That's why only God can forgive sin.

Let's say that a clumsy person is walking down the street, and they step on my toe. They say, "Oh, I'm really sorry, please forgive me for stepping on your toe" In that case, I would forgive them - Or at least I should. Let's say though that someone across the street yells to the person who stepped on my toe, "I forgive you for stepping on Phil's toe." That's dumb. Only I can forgive someone who stepped on my toe. For someone who's not involved to jump in and say they have the authority to forgive wrongs against me is not only dumb, but also insulting! So, when someone sins, they're sinning against God. And only God can forgive them. And forgiving a sin when you're not God is an insult to God. The people who raised this point were on to something.

But those of us who are reading know more about the story: We know what the apostle John said when he started his book about Jesus:

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. (John 1:1)

John tells us what the most important people in Israel didn't know: Jesus was God visiting the face of the earth. So, he had, and still has, the authority to forgive sins.

This wasn't the first time Jesus said something about judgement.

21 "Not everyone who says to me, 'Lord, Lord,' will enter the kingdom of heaven, but only the one who does the will of my Father who is in heaven. 22 Many will say to me on that day, 'Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in your name and in your name drive out demons and in your name perform many miracles?' 23 Then I will tell them plainly, 'I never knew you. Away from me, you evildoers!'  
(Matthew 7:21-23)

Jesus clearly said that on the day of Judgement, **he** will be the one standing at the gates of heaven. **He** will decide who gets in, and who will not. Jesus can forgive sins because he is God.

More than that, Jesus knew that he would pay the penalty for the sins of the world.

“He himself bore our sins” in his body on the cross... (1 Peter 2:24)

So, why can Jesus forgive sin? Why is he the Lord of Judgement? Because he is God  
And because he paid the penalty for our sins

### III. How hard is it to forgive sins?

Now, there are things that can be said, but sometimes you need to drive the point home. Jesus does this in a spectacular way. And when he does that, he answers an important question: ***How hard is it to forgive sins?***

4 Knowing their thoughts, Jesus said, “Why do you entertain evil thoughts in your hearts? 5 Which is easier: to say, ‘Your sins are forgiven,’ or to say, ‘Get up and walk’? 6 But I want you to know that the Son of Man has authority on earth to forgive sins.” So he said to the paralyzed man, “Get up, take your mat and go home.” 7 Then the man got up and went home. (Matthew 9:4-7)

What’s harder? Healing a paralyzed man or forgiving sin? We’ve talked about healing in the past. We learned that there are 30 trillion (with a ‘t’) cells in the human body. To heal someone, you’d have to know where they all are and how they work. You’d have to find the ones that aren’t working correctly. You’d have to fix them without breaking any of the others. To do all that, you would need the complete blueprint of a person’s body. That’s hard. Healing is hard.

How hard is it to forgive sin? We have no idea. Do sins have a price tag? Does one sin cost a hundred dollars while another costs a thousand? I heard someone suggest recently that the real problem of sin is that it separates us from God for eternity. If you have one sin, you’re separated from God forever.

As we said, Jesus paid the price for our sins on the cross. Does that mean that he had to spend eternity separated from God, feeling the wrath of God, for every person who ever lived? Billions of people have lived on planet earth. Did Jesus have to suffer wrath and separation for billions times eternity?

In our limited minds, we cannot fully comprehend things like infinity or eternity. To our best mathematicians, infinity is as high as you can go. There’s no point in multiplying infinity times anything. But you see, God is the Father of Eternity - He created infinity.

We don’t know for certain, but whatever it took to pay the price for the sins of the world, Jesus paid it.

What's harder, healing or forgiving sin? Both are hard. Both are things that only God can do. But my guess is that forgiving sins is much harder.

So, to make his point in a spectacular way, Jesus said, "Get up, and take your mat and go home." And the man did.

What kind of man is this? Lord of judgement. Jesus has the authority and the power to heal the most tragic of afflictions. He has the authority and the power to forgive sins. And the crowd could see that.

8 When the crowd saw this, they were filled with awe; and they praised God, who had given such authority to man. (Matthew 9:8)

They didn't know the end of the story yet, but the crowd could see that this was no ordinary man.

#### **IV. What does this mean for us today?**

What does this mean for us today? Lots of things, but I'd like to focus on one point. We've just read about a man who was paralyzed. Most would say that there's not a whole lot that's worse. You would think that this man would be totally consumed by his affliction, but he wasn't. He suffered pain and loss and loneliness and lack of purpose. But there was one thing even more important than any of those things - His sin.

To this man, his biggest problem was his sin. Jesus knew that, too. That's why the first thing Jesus did was reassure this poor man. He let him know right away that his sins were forgiven.

Friend, what is your biggest problem? Most people think their biggest problem is their situation. Maybe they're concerned about money. Can they pay the rent? Can they put food on the table?

Many people worry about bigger things. Is there going to be a terrible war where nuclear weapons destroy the earth? Will we dump so much pollution into our environment that we'll all die from some horrible environmental catastrophe? Maybe the planet will melt? Maybe we'll all die from some horrible disease?

If you're worried about any of these things or something more, you're not a terrible person. - ***It's just that none of these things are your biggest problem.***

Your biggest problem, and my biggest problem, is our sin. Our sin is such a big problem, that all the other things grow dim in comparison. Fortunately for us, Jesus knows what our biggest problem is.

What kind of man is this? He is the Lord of Judgment. And it's a good thing. He is God. He has the authority to forgive. And he is good. No one is too small or too unimportant. You are as important to him as the next person.

He is generous. How hard is it to forgive? It's hard. Our Lord Jesus loves us so much that he paid the penalty for our sin. He paid the price on the cross. He did the hard work so we wouldn't have to.

### **A Decision**

There are two kinds of people reading this.

1) If you've never asked Jesus to forgive your sins, do it today. Let us tell you how. There is some important information at the end of this article that will tell you how to contact us.

Believe me, sin is your biggest problem. Ask Jesus to forgive!

2) Then there are those who have done this. If that's the case, sin is no longer your biggest problem. If you truly came to Jesus and asked him to forgive, he has done it. You will spend eternity with Jesus in his kingdom.

However, sin is still a problem. Sadly, being forgiven does not make us perfect. We still sin - often. And when we sin, we hurt others, and we hurt our ability to enjoy God. That's why we still need to confess our sins before God on a regular basis. "If we confess our sins", we are told, "he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness." (1 John 1:9)

### **Conclusion**

What kind of man is this? He is Lord of Judgement. Your biggest problem, and my biggest problem is our sin. Go to Jesus today and ask him to forgive your sins. He will gladly do it, because he loves you.

Let him show you his love today!

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**Thanks for reading! Here are some helpful links:**

Trinity Church  
[www.TrinityTeaneck.org](http://www.TrinityTeaneck.org)

Phil's Site  
[PhilBrainerd.com](http://PhilBrainerd.com)

To learn how to begin a new life with Jesus Christ, visit Billy Graham's site:

[PeaceWithGod.net](http://PeaceWithGod.net)

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