



Matthew Lesson 12

July 14, 2020

Scriptures from TLV

“The *Megillah* of Matthew”

9:1-38

When we last saw Yeshua, He was on the opposite shore of Lake *Kinneret*, the Sea of Galilee after casting demons out of two demon possessed men. Chapter 9 begins with: *1 After getting into a boat, Yeshua crossed over and came to His own town (Matthew 9:1 TLV).* It is interesting that Matthew refers to Capernaum as Yeshua’s own town. It is the town which He chose to serve as His headquarters after beginning His ministry. It is only 20 miles from His boyhood home of Nazareth. While not out of town on business, Yeshua apparently lived with *Shimon Kefa* and his family who had moved there from Bethsaida. *Kefa*, Andrew, Philip and *Ya’acov* and *Yochanan*, James and John, were all from Bethsaida, another fishing village about 9 miles further north. *Yehudah*, Judas, was from *K’riot*, a town 20 miles south of Jerusalem. Where the other disciples came from or whether any were actually living in Capernaum during this time is not known. If they didn’t live there, they must have rented rooms in other homes while there with Yeshua or they all bunked in with *Shimon*.

2 Just then, some people brought to Him a paralyzed man lying on a cot. And seeing their faith, Yeshua said to the paralyzed man, “Take courage, son! Your sins are forgiven.” 3 Then some of the Torah scholars said among themselves, “This fellow blasphemes!” 4 And knowing their thoughts, Yeshua said, “Why are you entertaining evil in your hearts? 5 For which is easier, to say, ‘Your sins are forgiven,’ or to say, ‘Get up and walk’? 6 But so you may know that the Son of Man has authority on earth to pardon sins...” Then He tells the paralyzed man, “Get up, take your cot and go home.” 7 And he got up and went home. 8 When the crowd saw it, they were afraid and glorified God, who had given such authority to men (Matthew 9:2-8 TLV).

This seems be a parallel account to those found in Mark 2 and Luke 5, but in this account, no hole was made in the roof to let the man down. Probably it did happen that way, but Matthew didn’t seem to find that detail important to the story. What he focused on was that Yeshua forgave the man of his sins as a way of healing him.

A question which arises is, did this man have a very large number of sins and if so, were they somehow related to him being paralyzed? There has always been a question about this in my mind and it raises the question: “does sin cause sickness?” Based on what we know, we would have to answer, “not always, but sometimes.” With regard to this man, is it possible that he was doing something sinful, like breaking into a house and somehow fell and broke his back? Or maybe he fell off a donkey that he was stealing. In those kinds of situations, we can see a direct relationship between a sin and sickness or disability. But, we also have the sins of drunkenness and gluttony which can lead to heart, liver and kidney disease. Smoking can lead to lung cancer, etc. These sins can lead to sickness. Yeshua had compassion on the man and forgave him whatever the sins were. But, we can take warning

for our own lives so that we do not end up having to ask Yeshua to heal us of something which we ourselves caused. We know that He is compassionate and does not exclude us from His healing even if we are sinners and caused our own sickness.

It was just as easy to say “your sins are forgiven” as it was to say “pick up your mat and walk.” There was no difference because He had the authority. Just before Yeshua ascended to the Father, he said this to His disciples: 18 ... *“All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to Me”* (Matthew 28:18b TLV). He had the authority to do it either way, but His point in this case seems to have been to show the Scribes and Pharisees that He did have the authority to forgive sins. When it says that seeing this happen, the crowd glorified G-d, they probably said a *b’racha*, a blessing. The Greek word used is *doxazó* (dox-ad'-zo), meaning to esteem glorious. Speaking in Hebrew, the people would have likely said, *“Barukh atah ADONAI, eloheinu melekh ha’olam;”* “Blessed are you ADONAI our G-d, king of the universe,” and then would have added some other words of praise.

9 As Yeshua was passing by from there, He saw a man named Matthew sitting at the tax collector’s booth. He said to him, *“Follow Me.”* And he got up and followed Him (Matthew 9:9 TLV). The tax collector’s booth was on the road which passed by Capernaum. Because he worked there, it is possible that Matthew also lived there.

10 Now it happened that when Yeshua was reclining at the table in the house, many tax collectors and sinners came and were reclining with Yeshua and His disciples (Matthew 9:10 TLV). It doesn’t say whose house this was, but very likely was *Shimon Kefa’s* house. It seems that Peter’s wife had guests a number of times, but I’m sure she served them joyfully. We said earlier that archeological evidence determined that Peter’s house was a fairly large house for that time and they must have been able to accommodate the twelve as well as possibly that same number of tax collectors and friends of Matthew. *Kefa* also would have had a sizeable food bill. The group was most likely seated in one of the courtyards of the home rather than a room. This discussion about these men being there is a continuation of Matthew’s calling. The implication seems to be that Matthew’s friends were sinners. Tax collectors were employed by the Romans and had a reputation of cheating the people.

11 When the Pharisees saw this, they said to His disciples, *“Why does this Teacher of yours eat with tax collectors and sinners?”* 12 But when He heard this, Yeshua said, *“Those who are healthy have no need for a doctor, but those who are sick do. 13 Now go and learn what this means: ‘Mercy I desire, and not sacrifice.’ For I didn’t come to call the righteous, but the sinful”* (Matthew 9:11-13 TLV).

It seems that there was always a group of Scribes and Pharisees lurking nearby, possibly to try and obtain evidence to use against Yeshua. They may have seen this group, a group with which they were already familiar, enter the house.

But, to this group of Pharisees, fellowshiping with, eating and drinking with sinners, was different than healing people. They were self-righteous; holier than thou. Yeshua healed everyone, the sinners and the righteous and He readily ate with sinners. “The righteous” does not imply that those persons had no sin, but in G-d’s eyes, they were just. They were following His plan. But, the sinful group eating with Yeshua were foreign to His righteousness and most likely had never heard His plan for them. Yeshua quoted Hosea: 6 *“For I delight in loyalty (mercy) and not sacrifice, knowledge of God more than burnt offerings”* (Hosea 6:6 TLV). Yeshua was using Hebrew parallelism to fit Hosea’s words to the current situation. Loyalty (or mercy) is parallel with knowledge of G-d and sacrifice is parallel with burnt offerings.

loyalty – *chesed*: goodness, kindness, favor, mercy knowledge of God – *da'at elohim*: knowing G-d These are equivalent attributes. Knowing G-d meant that this person exhibited goodness, kindness, favor and mercy.

sacrifice – *zebach*: a sacrifice.
burnt offering.

burnt offerings – *olah*: a whole

Both of these are physical sacrifices which would have been brought to the altar. Hosea did not say and Yeshua was not saying that physical sacrifices were not required, but that in a comparison, these good qualities of spirit were more desired by ADONAI. This is an echo of Psalm 51. David said: *14 Restore to me the joy of Your salvation and sustain me with a willing spirit* (Psalm 51:14 TLV) and follows it with: *18 For You would not delight in sacrifice, or I would give it, nor be pleased by burnt offerings* (Psalm 51:18 TLV). David asked for a willing spirit and also says that he is willing to give a sacrifice or burnt offerings, but he realizes that ADONAI doesn't delight in those things. He does require them, but is much more pleased when His servants also exhibit a willing spirit of mercy, kindness and goodness. Today, an example might be that ADONAI has commanded us to appear before Him on *Shabbat*. This is parallel to a burnt offering in Yeshua's day. Yes, we are to appear, but how much more does ADONAI prefer our willing spirit of love and mercy. Then, for the benefit of the Pharisees, Yeshua added: "I didn't come to call the righteous, but the sinful." This seemed to be a pointed reference to them as they appeared to look down on sinners and had no compassion for them.

14 Then John's disciples came to Him, saying, "Why do we and the Pharisees fast, but Your disciples do not fast?" 15 And Yeshua said to them, "The guests of the bridegroom cannot mourn while the bridegroom is with them, can they? But the days will come when the bridegroom is taken away from them, and then they will fast" (Matthew 9:14-15 TLV). John here, is obviously *Yochanan* the Immerser, Yeshua's cousin. After announcing Yeshua as the Lamb of G-d, now he seems confused. Why is the *Mashiach* not being obedient to the current norms of religious practice. Reading various Scriptures, we see that different people fasted for different reasons by their own choice. In Ezra 8, the people on their way to Jerusalem fasted to demonstrate their sincerity. In Acts 14, *Sha'ul* and *Barnaba* fasted when appointing elders. In Luke 4, Yeshua fasted 40 days in the wilderness. When repenting and returning to G-d, making *t'shuvah*, fasting was sometimes done as in Joel 2. None of these were required by Scripture, but ADONAI did require fasting on *Yom Kippur* (Leviticus 16). Here, John's question seems to be directed to a set schedule of fasting such as he and the Pharisees followed. Maybe they fasted on Tuesdays and Thursdays or some regular schedule.

But, Yeshua did not follow a schedule of fasting after His 40 days of fasting in the wilderness. I'm certain that He would have fasted on *Yom Kippur* because He perfectly followed *Torah*. He obviously taught His disciples to fast as we saw in the Sermon on the Mount. That would be something which they would do after He, the bridegroom, had departed from the earth. Yeshua was using the custom of a Hebrew wedding celebration as an example for His *talmidim*; feasting with them and celebrating His presence among them while He was present.

What Yeshua said next was a continuation of the same thought: *16 "And no one puts a patch of unshrunk cloth on an old garment, for the patch pulls away from the garment and a worse tear happens. 17 Nor do they put new wine into old wineskins. Otherwise the skins burst, and the wine spills out and the skins are ruined. But they put new wine into fresh wineskins, and both are preserved"* (Matthew 9:16-17 TLV). Yeshua again used a very Jewish

method to compare and contrast common everyday things in order to illustrate a spiritual point. He was using metaphor when He spoke of an old garment being patched with new, unshrunk cloth. He said that you wouldn't do that because it is obvious that it would tear. But, first you must shrink the new cloth and then patch the old cloth which had been washed many times and was fully shrunken. He used a similar example with wine. He said that you would not put freshly fermented wine, wine which was still undergoing the process of fermentation and releasing bubbles, into old, hardened leather wineskins. New wine, actual wine, not grape juice, had to be put into freshly made wineskins because its leather was still capable of expanding.

To what was He comparing these things? The most obvious answer is that He was comparing faith in Himself and the theology which He had put forth to the warped Judaism of the Scribes and Pharisees. This new theological view was what we might today call Messianic Judaism and others might call Christianity. This is not to say that Yeshua renounced the Judaism of the day. His message was that it had to be reconditioned, changed to allow these new elements to fit in. He didn't do away with *Torah*. He didn't do away with sacrifice. Sacrifice continued as long as the Temple was standing. His message was to the Pharisees. You need to change so that you can accept my message. You need to drink the "new wine" from the Father which I am bringing to you. The Judaism which Yeshua prescribed has never been done away with. It has just been modified to allow the truth which He brought to earth to fit in. Atonement through His sacrifice, now the only effective sacrifice, has been added. But, *Torah* is still here and the *mitzvot* which can be followed are followed because they were written on our hearts when we entered the New Blood Covenant of Jeremiah 31 by the blood of the Lamb.

Just as He was saying these things to them, a synagogue leader came and began to bow before Him, saying, "My daughter has just died, but come lay Your hand on her and she will live." 19 And Yeshua got up and began to follow him, with His disciples (Matthew 9:18-19 TLV). The TLV has interpreted the Greek archon to mean synagogue leader. I believe that was most likely true, but it could also refer to leaders in other capacities among the Jews such as elders. This man had great faith, believing that Yeshua could raise his daughter from the dead. Most would have thought, "It's over. My daughter is dead." But, this man who apparently knew that Yeshua was nearby, ran to Him. He wouldn't have had far to go. Capernaum was considered to be a large village of that day and was estimated to have had a population of about 1,500, but even so would not have been more than a fourth mile across.

20 Just then a woman, losing blood for twelve years, came from behind and touched the tzitzit of His garment. 21 For she kept saying to herself, "If only I touch His garment, I will be healed." 22 But then Yeshua turned and saw her. "Take heart, daughter," He said, "your faith has made you well." That very hour the woman was healed (Matthew 9:20-22 TLV).

This woman's need continues to demonstrate how much Yeshua was in demand once people began to hear that He could and would heal. Matthew has not chosen to focus on the size of the crowd, but Mark 5 describing this same event, says: 24 So Yeshua went off with him, and a big crowd was following Him and pressing upon Him (Mark 5:24 TLV). Luke 8 says essentially the same thing: 42 ..because his only daughter, about twelve years old, was dying. But as He made His way, the masses were crushing in upon Him (Luke 8:42 TLV). We also note that Luke says the daughter was dying while Matthew said she was dead. What's going on? Mark also said that she was dead. We won't spend a lot of time on this knowing that ADONAI's word is true and cannot contradict itself. The most obvious explanation is

that since both Mark and Luke first report that the daughter is dying and then someone comes from the house and says that she is dead, it is very likely that Matthew just did not report the first instance when the father said that she was dying. The other point, that there was a huge crowd crushing in on Yeshua and each trying to have their requests answered was also not reported by Matthew.

This woman who had been bleeding for twelve years was at this point in time considered to be unclean. There is no way to know from where her flow of blood was coming, but most theologians think it would have been from her vagina. If that was the case, according to *Torah*, she would have been considered a *niddah*, a menstruating woman who could not touch or be touched during her uncleanness. Others have suggested that the blood was from hemorrhoids, but I think that is unlikely. This woman may have had the condition which today is called menorrhagia, a condition of excessively long and heavy periods of menstruation which can also include pain. Having menorrhagia would not mean that she had been bleeding continuously for twelve years, but that she had suffered from the condition for 12 years. Rather than being in her period of *niddah* for three to seven days, the normal length of time, she may have had a discharge for up to 14 days or more per period. During these times, she would have had to identify herself as unclean. She took a big chance by going into the middle of a large crowd and then touching Yeshua's *tzitzit*. *Torah* does not describe any penalty for what she did, but she would certainly have been severely scolded by those Pharisees who seemed to be following Yeshua around.

She touched Yeshua's *tzitzit*. The Greek word is *kraspedon*, which is described as a corner or a fringe of a garment and is equivalent to *tzitzit* in Hebrew. We know that in the 1st century, Jews wore an inner garment called a *ketonet* and an outer garment called a *simlah*. The *simlah* could be removed while working. Yeshua's *tzitzit* would have been on his outer cloak.

Every male Jew was required by *Torah* to wear *tzitzit*. 37 *Adonai spoke to Moses saying, 38 "Speak to Bnei-Yisrael. Say to them that they are to make for themselves tzitzit on the corners of their garments throughout their generations, and they are to put a blue cord on each tzitzit. 39 It will be your own tzitzit—so whenever you look at them, you will remember all the mitzvot of Adonai and do them and not go spying out after your own hearts and your own eyes, prostituting yourselves. 40 This way you will remember and obey all My mitzvot and you will be holy to your God. 41 I am Adonai your God. I brought you out of the land of Egypt to be your God. I am Adonai your God"* (Numbers 15:37-41 TLV). Those of us who believe that *Torah* is for today wear *tzitzit* for the purpose for which ADONAI commanded them to be worn. He said that when you look upon them, you who are wearing them will remember all the *mizvot* of ADONAI to do them. That is why we and observant traditional Jews wear *tzitzit*. We are reminded of the *mitzvot* so that we will keep them. In the 1st century they were on the four corners of the outer garment, but as clothing styles changed, the way *tzitzit* were worn has changed. The modern *tallit* is essentially found in two forms, the *tallit katan*, the small *tallit*, an undershirt, and the *tallit gadol*, the large *tallit*. The small *tallit* is worn as an everyday part of inner wear while the large *tallit* is only worn during certain religious services or during prayer.

The woman with the extended condition of *niddah*, excessive menstrual bleeding, had to have some idea that touching Yeshua's *tzitzit* could possibly benefit her. It may have come from her knowledge of Malachi 3:20, a Messianic Scripture. In Christian Bibles, this verse is 4:2. It says: 20 *"But for you who revere My Name, the sun of righteousness will rise,*

with healing in its wings. Then you will go forth and skip about like calves from the stall (Malachi 3:20 TLV). This is a reference to the *tallit* of the Messiah, the Sun of Righteousness, having healing in its wings, its *tzitzit*. Wings in Hebrew is *kanaph*, the extremity or corner with its *tzitzit*.

(Don't read) *20 Just then a woman, losing blood for twelve years, came from behind and touched the tzitzit of His garment. 21 For she kept saying to herself, "If only I touch His garment, I will be healed." 22 But then Yeshua turned and saw her. "Take heart, daughter," He said, "your faith has made you well." That very hour the woman was healed* (Matthew 9:20-22 TLV).

With this knowledge and the faith that Yeshua would heal her, the woman grasped His *tzitzit*. Yeshua said: "Your faith, your *pistice* in Greek, your faith, your belief, your trust, and your confidence along with your faithfulness to ADONAI, has made you *sozo*, saved, healed and well.

23 When Yeshua came into the synagogue leader's house and saw the flute players and the noisy crowd wailing, 24 He said, "Go away, for the girl isn't dead, but sleeping." And they began jeering at Him. 25 But when the crowd had been cleared out, He went in and took her hand, and the girl got up. 26 And news of this spread all around that region (Matthew 9:23-26 TLV).

This was a different crowd and not the one which was eagerly pressing around seeking healing earlier. They did not have the faith of the others. Matthew says simply that Yeshua took her hand and she came to life. She got up from her bed where she had been lying dead. There are many more details told in this same episode in Mark 5 and Luke 8. There we find that Yeshua speaks to her as well as touching her.

Here again, we find that Matthew is right to the point. As Sergeant Friday said, "Just the facts ma'am." We wonder why Matthew writes it this way. We could say that since He was inspired by ADONAI to write it that this was the way that ADONAI wanted it. How did it come about this way? Matthew would not have said to himself, "I think I'll write the story of Yeshua," and then sat down under a tree with pencil and paper to write it. He based it on something which was already there. The belief that the synoptic Gospels of Matthew, Mark and Luke have Lukan priority means that Luke was written first. This is the belief of the Jerusalem School of Synoptic Research, about which we've spoken previously. This idea, originally put forward by Dr. Robert Lindsey, states that Luke was the first to write. Then Mark wrote using details from Luke. Finally, Matthew wrote having details from those two available to him. Why he left out so many of the details which Luke and Mark included is unknown, except that what he wrote was by divine inspiration. He included just what ADONAI wished. The three Gospels don't contradict, but compliment each other.

27 As Yeshua went on from there, two blind men followed Him, crying out, "Ben-David, have mercy on us!" 28 When He went into the house, the blind men came to Him. And Yeshua said to them, "Do you believe that I am able to do this?" "Yes, Master," they said to Him. 29 Then He touched their eyes, saying, "According to your faith, let it be done for you." 30 And their eyes were opened. And Yeshua warned them sternly, "See that no one knows." 31 But they went out and spread the news about Him all around that region (Matthew 9:27-31 TLV).

This account is not found in the other two synoptic Gospels. This means that in addition to using information from them, Matthew had also added information from his own memory. Why Luke and Mark left them out is unknown, but there is again no contradiction.

Yeshua left the house of Jairus, the synagogue leader whose name is found in the other Gospel accounts, and walked across town to *Kefa's* house. As he was about to enter, two blind men approached Him and calling Him *Ben-David*, Son of David. Son of David, a messianic term, meant that the two men recognized Yeshua as *Mashiach*, the Messiah who had been foretold to come. Yeshua said: "If you have the faith, you will be healed." This, was an exhibition of their faith. And, they were healed. They had faith that He would heal them. He told them not to tell, but they were so excited that they told everyone they could find!

32 As they were going out, a mute man plagued by a demon was brought to Him. 33 After the demon was driven out, the mute man started speaking. The crowds were astounded, saying, "Never has anything like this been seen in Israel!" 34 But the Pharisees were saying, "By the prince of demons He drives out demons" (Matthew 9:32-34 TLV).

The implication here is that after healing the two blind men, Yeshua had gone into Simon Peter's house, but was now going out again when approached by the mute man. He healed him. After He healed the mute man, this group of Pharisees, probably the same ones who were following Him around, just had to make a comment. By what they said, they were acknowledging that demons were real and really being driven out, but said that Yeshua was serving *HaSatan* and not ADONAI. Today, many say the opposite: "Demons aren't real. It's just mental disease; something in the mind." Demons are real and have to be dealt with spiritually! And, the power of G-d through Yeshua's name can cast them out.

Someone more astute than me has noticed that in Matthew 9, Yeshua healed a paralyzed man, two blind men, and a mute man and pointed out that connection with prophecy. The *Tanakh* promises the healing of the lame, the blind, and the mute as signs by which the Messiah would be recognized. Isaiah foretold: *22 For Adonai is our Judge, Adonai is our Lawgiver, Adonai is our King— He will save us* (Isaiah 33:22 TLV)! And then followed it with this: *5 Then the eyes of the blind will be opened and the ears of the deaf unstopped. 6 Then the lame will leap like a deer, and the tongue of the mute will sing* (Isaiah 35:5-6 TLV). In this chapter, *Yochanan* the Immerser's disciples were sent to question Yeshua about fasting. In Matthew 11, from prison, John questioned once again. He sent this message: *3... "Are You the Coming One, or do we look for another"* (Matthew 11:3b TLV)? *4 Yeshua replied, "Go report to John what you hear and see: 5 the blind see and the lame walk, those with tza'arat are cleansed and the deaf hear, and the dead are raised and the poor have good news proclaimed to them"* (Matthew 11:4-5 TLV). I feel sure that when he heard Yeshua's answer, John's spirit was calmed. Yeshua answered John by using *remez*, hinting at an earlier Scripture, Isaiah 35. His answer to him was, "Yes, I am the one!"

35 Now Yeshua was going around all the towns and villages, teaching in their synagogues and proclaiming the Good News of the kingdom, and healing every kind of disease and sickness. 36 When He saw the crowds, He felt compassion for them, because they were harassed and helpless, like sheep without a shepherd. 37 Then He said to His disciples, "The harvest is plentiful, but the workers are few. 38 Therefore pray to the Lord of the harvest that He may send out workers into His harvest field" (Matthew 9:35-38 TLV).

By this, Yeshua was saying that what the Pharisees were doing was not helping, that they were not acting as shepherds of the people, something which they claimed to be. The

Pharisees were everywhere throughout Israel, in all the synagogues, in the Temple and even in the *Sanhedrin*, the highest court. But, the people were still like sheep without a shepherd. The same kind of blame fell on the *Kohenim*, the priests and also the *Kohen Gadol*. They were only interested in their agenda. The High Priest was especially in collusion with the Romans and was primarily interested in preserving his position as High Priest. The workers were few, but their number was growing. When *Sha'ul* made his last trip to Jerusalem in approximately the year 57, *Ya'acov* and the elders reported this to him: 20.... “You see, brother, how many myriads there are among the Jewish people who have believed—and they are all zealous for the Torah” (Acts 21:20b TLV). About 27 years after Yeshua died as a sacrifice for us, the number of believers had grown to tens of thousands and we would have to believe that many of them were workers. The harvest remains plentiful today, but the workers are still few. 38 *Therefore pray to the Lord of the harvest that He may send out workers into His harvest field*” (Matthew 9:38 TLV). *Shalom aleichem!*