

## Jesus Entered Their Home

Mk. 1:29 And forthwith, when they were come out of the synagogue, they entered into the house of Simon and Andrew, with James and John. <sup>30</sup> But Simon's wife's mother lay sick of a fever, and anon they tell him of her. <sup>31</sup> And he came and took her by the hand, and lifted her up; and immediately the fever left her, and she ministered unto them.

Earlier, on the Sabbath morning, the Lord Jesus and His disciples had attended the synagogue in Capernaum (v.21ff.). The service had ended about noon time, and along with James and John, He entered the house of Simon and Andrew to find Simon's mother-in-law ill. He stayed with her throughout the afternoon, and in the evening many of the local people brought the sick to Him for healing and the demon-possessed to have the evil spirits cast out (v.34). The disciples observed, v.37 *All men seek for Thee. ...*

Here is the power of Jesus. If He is to be the Saviour of the world, He has to rescue souls from Satan's grip. He must demonstrate His power over the effects of the curse of sin ... He would free men and women from the physical effects and also the spiritual. Therefore, the task with which Christ was commissioned was not just for the healing of the body but the saving of the soul.

The opening verse in the chapter announces, *The beginning of the gospel of Jesus Christ, the Son of God. ...* This is all about the Messiah, the Son of God, the Lamb of God entering this world in order to demonstrate His power over the realms of darkness ... *Is He Who He claims to be?*

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If someone was to come today and announce themselves to be Jesus, would we believe them? Of course, it comes as no surprise that there *are* many today who claim to be Jesus. You may have heard of some of them, - David Icke who used to be a sports presenter, David Koresh who was the leader of the Branch Davidians, Alan John Miller who founded the Divine Truth movement in Australia. ... This is how Jesus said it would be prior to His second coming, *Mk. 13:6 many shall come in my name, saying, I am [Christ]; and shall deceive many.*

But, if Jesus was to come today, how would we know for certain it was truly Him? Well, actually, it is quite straightforward. He won't just one day appear and announce His coming from a television studio, or from an internet website. ... When Jesus Christ returns every Holy Spirit-prepared and born-again believer alive on this earth will recognise Him immediately, and they will hear a sound from Heaven that will stretch across the globe.

... There will be such excitement when the announcement of His coming is declared. ... And those who have died with the knowledge of Jesus Christ as Saviour will at that very moment be raised up to meet Him in the air ... and then those believers who will be alive on that day will rise to meet Him too. He will draw His people unto Himself from every region of this world ... some from out of poverty, some from out of wealth, some from prisons where they are suffering for Him ... Every child of God will know Jesus has returned because He will wonderfully and gloriously draw them unto Himself.

... But how did He go about presenting the proof of Who He was to the people in His own area two thousand years ago? ...

After the service in the synagogue had ended, Jesus was accompanied by four of His disciples, - Simon, Andrew, James, and John, - into a local home. It was the home of Simon and Andrew, just a few yards from the synagogue. Simon and Andrew, and James and John knew each other well. They worked together in the fishing business. They had been successful, and the fish they caught would have brought them a comfortable lifestyle. They would have sold widely across the region. Fish, of course, was the staple meat in the ancient world.

Andrew and Simon had previously met Jesus when John the Baptist was preaching on the banks of the River Jordan, *Jn. 1:40 One of the two which heard John speak, and followed him, was Andrew, Simon Peter's brother. 41 He first findeth his own brother Simon, and saith unto him, We have found the Messias, which is, being interpreted, the Christ. 42 And he brought him to Jesus. And when Jesus beheld him, he said, Thou art Simon the son of Jona: thou shalt be called Cephas, which is by interpretation, A stone.* They had returned to Galilee, though, and it was only recently that they, - along with James and John, - had been called on the seashore to follow Jesus (Mk. 1:16-20).

Now, Simon and Andrew were originally from Bethsaida, a short distance inland from the northern shore of the Sea of Galilee. They most probably moved the few miles to Capernaum because that was where their work was based. They would have regularly attended the synagogue ... and indeed, the building was so very close to their home.

Simon was married, - verse thirty mentions his mother-in-law. Paul also refers to him being married in I Cor. 9:5, *Have we not power to lead about a sister, a wife, as well as other apostles, and [as] the brethren of the Lord, and Cephas?* Simon is reported to have brought his wife with him on missionary trips. But, at this early stage in his service for the Lord, he was living in Capernaum ...

In the house in which the archaeologists say he lived, - the house that Jesus visited here, - they have found several hearths, indicating there were a number of kitchens in the home. They found stairways on the outside of the building leading to the flat roof. They also discovered sacred devotional graffiti on the stonework, written in Greek and Latin and Syriac and Aramaic. Going away back to the end of the first century, it looks as if it was a recognised gathering place for the early Christians. It was a very important home in Capernaum.

It had a courtyard and additions for the extended family, - remember Simon and his wife lived here, along with Andrew and probably his wife, and the children, and Simon's mother-in-law lived there too. It was quite a sizeable building.

And Simon is actually known by three different names in Scripture. His Hebrew name is *Simon*, or Simeon, ... and he would have been called after Jacob and Leah's second son. Remember how Jacob was tricked by Laban into marrying Leah instead of his first choice, - the woman he really loved, Rachel, - and Leah knew this, and she wanted to prove to Jacob she was worthy of his love and attention, and so she named her son, Simeon, because the Lord hath heard that I was hated (Gen. 29:33).

Then, Simon also came to be known as Peter. This happened when the disciples were with Jesus further north, - in today's Golan Heights, - at a place called Caesarea Philippi (Baniyas). Jesus had asked them, Mt. 16:15 [W]hom say ye that I am? Simon answered, v.16 Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God. On his confession of faith, Jesus gave him a new name, v.17 Blessed art thou, Simon Barjona [i.e. 'son of Jonah'; *Jonah means 'dove'*]: for flesh and blood hath not revealed [it] unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven. <sup>18</sup> And I say also unto thee, That thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it. ... Peter is the Greek word, meaning a 'stone' or a 'rock'.

He was also called 'Cephas' which was an Aramaic name that also means 'stone' or 'rock', - it was the Aramaic equivalent of the Greek Petros, Peter. He is called Cephas in Jn. 1:42 [as above], ... I Cor, 1:12 Now this I say, that every one of you saith, I am of Paul; and I of Apollos; and I of Cephas ... 3:22 Paul, or Apollos, or Cephas ... 9:5 [as above] ... 15:5 For I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received, how that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures; <sup>4</sup> And that he was buried, and that he rose again the third day according to the scriptures: <sup>5</sup> And that he was seen of Cephas, then of the twelve ... Gal. 2:9 And when James, Cephas, and John, who seemed to be pillars, perceived the grace that was given unto me, they gave to me and Barnabas the right hands of fellowship. He would have been best known in his region as either Simon or Cephas.

He was also a plain-speaking man. This is demonstrated by his comment on Paul's epistles, he wrote, II Peter 3:14 Wherefore, beloved, seeing that ye look for such things, be diligent that ye may be found of him in peace, without spot, and blameless. <sup>15</sup> And account *that* the longsuffering of our Lord *is* salvation; even as our beloved brother Paul also according to the wisdom given unto him hath written unto you; <sup>16</sup> As also in all *his* epistles, speaking in them of these things; in which are some things hard to be understood, which they that are unlearned and unstable wrest [*distort*]

So, this is a little of the background. After the synagogue service ended, Simon and Andrew invited Jesus, with James and John, to their home ... and you can imagine how that house was the centre of attraction in Capernaum that day.

So, Jesus goes into Simon and Andrew's home, - along with James and John. He would have been invited there to eat with the family, - that was the tradition and the way the community would have showed their hospitality. Yes, Peter's mother-in-law wasn't well ... but that did not hinder the age-old custom to turn your home into a welcoming place for guests. ... And Jesus was the very special Guest in Simon's home that Sabbath.

And now we see the "But" Mark introduces, v.30 *But Simon's wife's mother lay sick of a fever.* ... This was much more than a 'fever', though. This wasn't simply a head-cold, or feeling 'out-of-sorts'. In his professional capacity, Dr. Luke described her as being taken with a *great* [μέγας] *fever* [πυρετός] (Lk. 4:38). She was 'burning up'! ... πῦρ is the Greek word for *fire*! The family were concerned about her! This was a crisis, *and anon they tell Him [Jesus] about her.*

'Anon' is a strange word, - we don't use it very often, - but it is the translation of the Greek word, εὐθέως. Now, Mark uses this word εὐθέως at least forty times throughout his Gospel, and we meet it here in v. 29 as 'forthwith', v.30 as 'anon', and v. 31 as 'immediately'. So, v.29 means, *Simon's wife's mother lay sick of a fever, and [immediately] they tell him of her.* ... There wasn't a moment to waste. They brought Jesus *immediately* to Simon's mother-in-law who was suffering a serious burning fever, and Luke says, 4:38 *they besought him for her,* - they 'begged'/pleaded with Him that He would heal her. That's how worried they were. They had a guest in their home, and instead of them answering to His needs, they were asking Him to answer to their need.

Well, Jesus responded. Mark records, v.31 *he came and took her by the hand, and lifted her up.* Dear knows what she had ... but He wasn't afraid to take her hand in His. He wasn't afraid to catch the woman's fever ... and when she could not take His hand, He took her's *and lifted her up.* ...

*That* is God's grace, - free and sovereign, "In lovingkindness Jesus came My soul in mercy to reclaim, And from the depths of sin and shame Through grace He lifted me." This was God's grace at work by the bedside of Simon Peter's mother-in-law. He came into her home to raise her up.

She was lying on her sickbed ... There wasn't a thing anyone in the family or in the town was able to do. It was only when Jesus came into that home, went to where she was, identified with her as He held her hand, and then as He lifted her up ... Is that not a picture of saving grace?!

Believer, you can remember how you struggled with your sin. Like Simon's mother-in-law it was the same affliction common to all men and women ... and it was such a heavy burden of sin that you could not shake it off. Its effects were holding you back from Christ. There was nothing you could do to change it ... *until* Jesus came. Remember the hymn George Beverly Shea used to sing about the blind man sitting by the roadside begging, "His eyes were blind, the light he could not see; He clutched his rags and shivered in the shadows, Then Jesus came and bade his darkness flee. ... So men today have found the Saviour able, They could not conquer passion, lust and sin; Their broken hearts had left them sad and lonely, Then Jesus came and dwelt, Himself, within."

That is the power Jesus has to heal ... and that is the power Jesus has *to save!* It does not matter what you have done. It does not matter if you have been in the lowest and most degrading of circumstances ... Jesus saves, and sets the prisoner free!

And here is a woman, and I don't suppose she would have been a bad woman. She would have done her best for people, and she would worked hard ... and yet she was struck down with such a condition that nobody but Jesus could heal. If you are not saved, - if you don't know Jesus as your Saviour, - you can believe in Him today. He knew this woman was in that house lying upon her bed ... and that was why He came. He came to meet her deepest need. If Jesus had not come to her house, she was so seriously ill she could have died.

But look at our story again, he came and took her by the hand, and lifted her up; and immediately the fever left her. ... She didn't have to go through a process, or travel to the local hospital for the next number of weeks, - she did not have to go and see anyone else *because the Great Physician met her need completely ... and immediately.* There is the demonstration of His mighty power! ... and immediately the fever left her.

We don't know how long she had been ill, but at the very moment Jesus drew alongside and took her hand ... at that very moment, *the fever left her*. ... And then, look what happened! When you and I haven't been too well, we usually take it easy for a while ... but this woman got up off her bed, *and she ministered [διακονέω] unto them*. ... That's another 'immediately'!

She got up, she went into the kitchen, and she prepared a full meal for Jesus, Simon, Andrew, James, John ... and anyone else who was in the household! She had been seriously ill ... but Jesus healed her and she immediately began her preparations to serve Him. She wouldn't have had a microwave or a fancy oven ... nor a shop down the street she could have run to get a ready meal, - no, she prepared it herself 'from scratch! The illness was gone. The fever had disappeared, - it hadn't just receded, - it had disappeared! She was as if she had never been ill.

Again, if you're not saved, it's not a church or a pastor who can save you, - it's only Christ. You tell me how bad you are, and how you think nothing or no one can save you ... I can only point you to the Saviour. There was nothing any of this family could do for their mother-in-law except introduce her to Jesus. That was all ... *but that was enough!*

None of them preached a sermon. They didn't carry her into the synagogue, and to the elders ... No, they introduced Jesus. We all have those whom we love who as yet do not know the Saviour ... What can you do that you haven't done already? You have brought them to church. You have prayed for them. You have tried to share the Gospel with them. There's not much more you can do ... *except this* ... You can keep on being faithful, trusting and praying that the Lord will bless your readiness to honour Him, and trust Him in the salvation of the souls of your loved ones ... because here is what His Word says, *II Peter 3:9 [He is] not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance*.

Bring the Lord home with you. Bring Him into your work. Bring Him where there are those taken down with the terrible 'fever' of sin. Call upon Him to take their hands in His, that He would raise them up and that they would be made alive together with Him ... for it is by God's grace alone they are to be saved. There is no other way ... God must save them, and He can! And, - like this woman, - He can raise them up and they will become His servants.

That was what happened when Simon and Andrew brought Jesus home! ... May the Lord bless and encourage us, through the study of His Word, for His Name's sake! Amen.