

The homeowner is annoyed: he has a big hole in his roof; the builder is late; and the builder keeps making light of the situation by telling awful jokes.

The builder has no sympathy and enjoys his own jokes immensely.

Read Mark 2:1-12

Intro            So imagine the scene the next day, as the owner of the house inspects the damage...

Homeowner      (climbing up on the roof and inspecting the hole) Where's that builder? Let's have a look... oh no...

Builder        (from the ground) Can I come up?

H                Oh there you are. Yes, yes, come up.

B                Morning squire, (introduces himself) Abraham ben Johnson.

H                Good morning, have you come about the roof?

B                Certainly have squire, Capernaum Construction at your service. Lowest prices in Judea and all the quality you would expect. Let's have a look at the problem.

H                Here's the hole. As you can see, it's quite large.

B                Certainly is squire, certainly is. You could drive a camel through that! Drive a camel through it! How'd it happen?

H                Well, we had a few friends round yesterday...

B                Night on the tiles was it? Night on the tiles?

H                No no no, we had a church meeting, we sang a few songs...

B                Raised the roof did you? Raised the roof?

H                Actually that new preacher was here. Jesus - do you know him? He used to be in your line of work.

B                From Nazareth? Yes... nice bloke, good carpenter, very creative. Very much like his father.

H                So Jesus was teaching us from the Bible...

B                Which book was he preaching from? Ruth? (he pronounces it 'roof') Ruth?

H                And while he was speaking, the most extraordinary thing happened.

B                Brought the house down did he? Brought the house down?

H                No, what happened was... You know that beggar - with the paralysed legs? Sits in the market place on a carpet?

B                Oh yeah, what do you call him? Matt? Matt!

H                His friends picked him up and brought him here to see Jesus.

B                And they made this hole to let the light in?

H No - they couldn't get in the front door, so they climbed on the roof and made a hole.

B I had a bloke fell off my roof once. I said to him, 'Were you listening to my conversations?'

H And what did he say?

B No, I was just eavesdropping! Eaves dropping!

H Anyway, then they tied some cords to the corners of his mat...

B Come to think of it, I sold them those cords. I had a few second hand bits lying around the yard... Made a few bob, I can tell you...

H You're going to say it was money for old rope, aren't you?

B (Looks blank) What? Sorry, mate, don't get it. What happened next?

H So these friends tied the cords to the corner of the mat and lowered him into the room.

B Oh, it's terrible that - being let down by your friends. Being let down by your friends!

H And then, what do you think Jesus said to him?

B Who's going to clean up this mess?

H No - he said, "Son, your sins are forgiven."

B What?! How can he say that? Who can forgive sins but God alone?

H Well that's what we were all thinking. And Jesus said he knew what we were thinking, and then he said, "Which is easier, to say 'your sins are forgiven' or to say 'get up, take your mat and walk'?"

B Cor, that's a tricky one. I mean, if I said, "your sins are forgiven," you'd never know whether they were or not, would you? But if I said, "get up and walk" you'd know whether the bloke got up, wouldn't you? But to really forgive sins, well, I couldn't really do that. Not properly, anyway.

H But Jesus said he could - and to prove it, he said to the man who was paralysed, "get up, take your mat and walk," and he got up, took his mat, and walked out of the house!

(Pause)

B And that's how you came to have a hole in the roof, is it?

H Yes it is, actually.

B And your insurance company believed that?

H Well, yes they did.

B Now, that's what I call a miracle!