

Mark 2

Jesus Power to Forgive Sins

The First Conflict with the Scribes and Pharisees.

Mark 2:1 And again he entered into Capernaum after *some* days; and it was noised that he was in the house.

This is after his first missionary circuit of Galilee. The parallel passage in Luke says:

Luke says plainly it was the Pharisees and doctors of the Law who needed healing.

Luke 5:17 And it came to pass on a certain day, as he was teaching, that there were Pharisees and doctors of the law sitting by, which were come out of every town of Galilee, and Judaea, and Jerusalem: and the power of the Lord was *present* to heal them.

The doctors of the law needed the kind of healing the prophet Isaiah foretold when he said that the Messiah would spiritually heal.

Isaiah 42:1-7 Behold my servant, whom I uphold; mine elect, *in whom* my soul delighteth; I have put my spirit upon him: he shall bring forth judgment to the Gentiles. 42:2 He shall not cry, nor lift up, nor cause his voice to be heard in the street. 42:3 A bruised reed shall he not break, and the smoking flax shall he not quench: he shall bring forth judgment unto truth. 42:4 He shall not fail nor be discouraged, till he have set judgment in the earth: and the isles shall wait for his law. 42:5 Thus saith God the LORD, he that created the heavens, and stretched them out; he that spread forth the earth, and that which cometh out of it; he that giveth breath unto the people upon it, and spirit to them that walk therein: 42:6 I the LORD have called thee in righteousness, and will hold thine hand, and will keep thee, and give thee for a covenant of the people, for a light of the Gentiles; 42:7 To open the blind eyes, to bring out the prisoners from the prison, *and* them that sit in darkness out of the prison house.

Mark 2:2 And straightway many were gathered together, insomuch that there was no room to receive *them*, no, not so much as about the door: and he preached the word unto them.

The Prophet Isaiah had also prophesied that the Messiah when He comes would physically heal the sick and had specifically prophesied that He would have the power and authority to forgive sins and “save”
cf:

Isaiah 35:3 Strengthen ye the weak hands, and confirm the feeble knees. **35:4** Say to them *that are* of a fearful heart, Be strong, fear not: behold, your God will come *with* vengeance, *even* God *with* a recompence; he will come and save you. **35:5** Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened, and the ears of the deaf shall be unstopped. **35:6** Then shall the lame *man* leap as an hart, and the tongue of the dumb sing: for in the wilderness shall waters break out, and streams in the desert. **35:7** And the parched ground shall become a pool, and the thirsty land springs of water: in the habitation of dragons, where each lay, *shall be* grass with reeds and rushes. **35:8** And an highway shall be there, and a way, and it shall be called The way of holiness; the unclean shall not pass over it; but it *shall be* for those: the wayfaring men, though fools, shall not err *therein*.

35:9 No lion shall be there, nor *any* ravenous beast shall go up thereon, it shall not be found there; but the redeemed shall walk *there*:

35:10 And the ransomed of the LORD shall return, and come to Zion with songs and everlasting joy upon their heads: they shall obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away

Mark 2:3 And they come unto him, bringing one sick of the palsy, which was borne of four.

Mark 2:4 And when they could not come nigh unto him for the press, they uncovered the roof where he was: and when they had broken *it* up, they let down the bed wherein the sick of the palsy lay.

Mark 2:5 When Jesus saw their faith, he said unto the sick of the palsy, Son, thy sins be forgiven thee.

Mark 2:6 But there were certain of the scribes sitting there, and reasoning in their hearts,

Mark 2:7 Why doth this *man* thus speak blasphemies? who can forgive sins but God only?

Mark 2:8 And immediately when Jesus perceived in his spirit that they so reasoned within themselves, he said unto them, Why reason ye these things in your hearts?

Mark 2:9 Whether is it easier to say to the sick of the palsy, *Thy* sins be forgiven thee; or to say, Arise, and take up thy bed, and walk?

Mark 2:10 But that ye may know that the Son of man hath power on earth to forgive sins, (he saith to the sick of the palsy,)

Mark 2:11 I say unto thee, Arise, and take up thy bed, and go thy way into thine house.

Mark 2:12 And immediately he arose, took up the bed, and went forth before them all; insomuch that they were all amazed, and glorified God, saying, We never saw it on this fashion.

Cf: Matt. 9:2-8. Compare Luke 5:17-26. The strange thing in V;26 should not surprise these doctors of the law for Isaiah had prophesied it cf:

Isaiah 28:18 & 28:21-22. Isaiah 28:16Therefore thus saith the Lord GOD, Behold, I lay in Zion for a foundation a stone, a tried stone, a precious corner *stone*, a sure foundation: he that believeth shall not make haste.**Isa 28:21** For the LORD shall rise up as *in* mount Perazim, he shall be wroth as *in* the valley of Gibeon, that he may do his work, his strange work; and bring to pass his act, his strange act. **Isa 28:22** Now therefore be ye not mockers, lest your bands be made strong: for I have heard from the Lord GOD of hosts a consumption, even determined upon the whole earth

As we learn from Luke, among those gathered were Pharisees and scribes from Judea, Jerusalem, and Galilee, evidently by a preconcerted arrangement. The whole incident illustrates: (1) The Divine power of Christ. He could assert that he forgave sins without blasphemy. (2) The difference between Christ and his apostles, none of whom claimed to forgive sins (see Acts 8:22-24). (3) It affords a test for all priests who claim to forgive sin. If they possessed power to forgive sins they would have power also to relieve the body of the physical consequences of sin.

Mark 2:13 And he went forth again by the sea side; and all the multitude resorted unto him, and he taught them.

Mark 2:14 And as he passed by, he saw Levi the *son* of Alphaeus sitting at the receipt of custom, and said unto him, Follow me. And he arose and followed him.

14. He saw Levi the son of Alphæus. Matthew Levi; the apostle after this, but now a publican. On the call of Matthew and Matthew's feast see notes on Matt. 9:9-17, and compare also Luke 5:27-39. [168]

Mark 2:15 And it came to pass, that, as Jesus sat at meat in his house, many publicans and sinners sat also together with Jesus and his disciples: for there were many, and they followed him.

15. Sat at meat. At a meal. In his house. Matthew's. Many publicans. Gatherers of the Roman tax. Sinners. Persons excommunicated from the synagogue.

Mark 2:16 And when the scribes and Pharisees saw him eat with publicans and sinners, they said unto his disciples, How is it that he eateth and drinketh with publicans and sinners?

Mark 2:17 When Jesus heard *it*, he saith unto them, They that are whole have no need of the physician, but they that are sick: I came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance.

Jeremiah 23:1-8 Jer 23:1 Woe be unto the pastors that destroy and scatter the sheep of my pasture! saith the LORD. 23:2 Therefore thus saith the LORD God of Israel against the pastors that feed my people; Ye have scattered my flock, and driven them away, and have not visited them: behold, I will visit upon you the evil of your doings, saith the LORD. 23:3 And I will gather the remnant of my flock out of all countries whither I have driven them, and will bring them again to their folds; and they shall be fruitful and increase. 23:4 And I will set up shepherds over them which shall feed them: and they shall fear no more, nor be dismayed, neither shall they be lacking, saith the LORD. 23:5 Behold, the days come, saith the LORD, that I will raise unto David a righteous Branch, and a King shall reign and prosper, and shall execute judgment and justice in the earth. 23:6 In his days Judah shall be saved, and Israel shall dwell safely: and this *is* his name whereby he shall be called, THE LORD OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS. 23:7 Therefore, behold, the days come, saith the LORD, that they shall no more say, The LORD liveth, which brought up the children of Israel out of the land of Egypt; 23:8 But, The LORD liveth, which brought up and which led the seed of the house of Israel out of the north country, and from all countries whither I had driven them; and they shall dwell in their own land

Jeremiah 32:38-40, 32:38 And they shall be my people, and I will be their God: **32:39** And I will give them one heart, and one way, that they may fear me for ever, for the good of them, and of their children after them: **32:40** And I will make an everlasting covenant with them, that I will not turn away from them, to do them good; but I will put my fear in their hearts, that they shall not depart from me

Jeremiah 33:15-16 In those days, and at that time, will I cause the Branch of righteousness to grow up unto David; and he shall execute judgment and righteousness in the land. **33:16** In those days shall Judah be saved, and Jerusalem shall dwell safely: and this *is the name* wherewith she shall be called, The LORD our righteousness.

Mark 2:18 And the disciples of John and of the Pharisees used to fast: and they come and say unto him, Why do the disciples of John and of the Pharisees fast, but thy disciples fast not?

Mark 2:19 And Jesus said unto them, Can the children of the bridechamber fast, while the bridegroom is with them? as long as they have the bridegroom with them, they cannot fast.

Mark 2:20 But the days will come, when the bridegroom shall be taken away from them, and then shall they fast in those days.

The Early Church fasted cf:

Matthew 6:16-18 Moreover when ye fast, be not, as the hypocrites, of a sad countenance: for they disfigure their faces, that they may appear unto men to fast. Verily I say unto you, They have their reward. **6:17** But thou, when thou fastest, anoint thine head, and wash thy face; **6:18** That thou appear not unto men to fast, but unto thy Father which is in secret: and thy Father, which seeth in secret, shall reward thee openly.

Acts 13:1-3 Now there were in the church that was at Antioch certain prophets and teachers; as Barnabas, and Simeon that was called Niger, and Lucius of Cyrene, and Manaen, which had been brought up with Herod the tetrarch, and Saul. 13:2 As they ministered to the Lord, and fasted, the Holy Ghost said, Separate me Barnabas and Saul for the work whereunto I have called them. 13:3 And when they had fasted and prayed, and laid *their* hands on them, they sent *them* away.

Mark 2:21 No man also seweth a piece of new cloth on an old garment: else the new piece that filled it up taketh away from the old, and the rent is made worse.

Christianity won't be patched on the old garment of Phairisee-ism cf:

Col 2:14 Blotting out the handwriting of ordinances that was against us, which was contrary to us, and took it out of the way, nailing it to his cross; 2:15 *And* having spoiled principalities and powers, he made a shew of them openly, triumphing over them in it. 2:16 Let no man therefore judge you in meat, or in drink, or in respect of an holyday, or of the new moon, or of the sabbath *days*: 2:17 Which are a shadow of things to come; but the body *is* of Christ.

Mark 2:22 And no man putteth new wine into old bottles: else the new wine doth burst the bottles, and the wine is spilled, and the bottles will be marred: but new wine must be put into new bottles.

Christianity won't be added to the old bottles of ritualism and showmanship cf:

Hebrews 8:6-13 But now hath he obtained a more excellent ministry, by how much also he is the mediator of a better covenant, which was established upon better promises. 8:7 For if that first *covenant*

had been faultless, then should no place have been sought for the second. 8:8 For finding fault with them, he saith, Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah: 8:9 Not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day when I took them by the hand to lead them out of the land of Egypt; because they continued not in my covenant, and I regarded them not, saith the Lord. 8:10 For this *is* the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, saith the Lord; I will put my laws into their mind, and write them in their hearts: and I will be to them a God, and they shall be to me a people: 8:11 And they shall not teach every man his neighbour, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord: for all shall know me, from the least to the greatest. 8:12 For I will be merciful to their unrighteousness, and their sins and their iniquities will I remember no more. 8:13 In that he saith, A new *covenant*, he hath made the first old. Now that which decayeth and waxeth old *is* ready to vanish away.

Jesus the Messiah is doing a new thing and Jesus is the New Wine that Luke refers to ...

Mark 2:23 And it came to pass, that he went through the corn fields on the sabbath day; and his disciples began, as they went, to pluck the ears of corn.

Mark 2:24 And the Pharisees said unto him, Behold, why do they on the sabbath day that which is not lawful?

Mark 2:25 And he said unto them, Have ye never read what David did, when he had need, and was an hungred, he, and they that were with him?

Mark 2:26 How he went into the house of God in the days of Abiathar the high priest, and did eat the shewbread, which is not lawful to eat but for the priests, and gave also to them which were with him?

In 1 Sam. 21:1-9, Ahimelech is represented as the high priest. Abiathar was his son and successor. The Revised Version gives the text of the best MSS. by omitting "the high priest."

Mark 2:27 And he said unto them, The sabbath was made for man, and not man for the sabbath:

The Sabbath rest; that is, a rest of one day in seven was made for man, not for Jews only. This implies that it is to be a universal institution; that the good of man requires it, and that it is not an arbitrary enactment, but a wise and benevolent provision for the welfare of the race. Experience shows that men are happiest, most moral, most prosperous and healthiest where it is devoutly observed.

Mark 2:28 Therefore the Son of man is Lord also of the sabbath.

This affirms the Divine nature of Jesus. None but the Divine is Lord of a divine institution. Since Christ is Lord of the Sabbath day, he has the right to modify it, to adapt it to the new dispensation, and to change the time of its observance from the last day of the week to the first, so as to make it the memorial of the beginning of the New Creation, instead of commemorating the rest from the first creation.