

Mark: The Mysterious Messiah

Week 3: Mark 2:1-17

Introductory Exercise. If you could ask one historical figure, “Why did you do that?” who would the “you” be and what would the “that” be? Why do you pick this person and this event?

When the paralytic shows up in Capernaum, who carries him? What literary effect does such a name for these people produce? What DOES THE TEXT SAY about “their” motives for doing so? What sort of reading does a text like this invite from the readers?

When Jesus pronounces forgiveness, what is the subject of the sentence? What words are conspicuously NOT the subject of the sentence? What sort of story is building up here? What sorts of people object here, and what is their objection? What would people in Jesus's day normally do to get their sins forgiven? Why is Jesus's action here so threatening?

What name does Jesus use to refer to himself in this passage? What story in Daniel 7 does he invoke doing so? How do people react this time when they see this sign?

When a new pericope (episode) starts in 2:13, what verb says what Jesus is doing this time by the sea? What differences and what continuities are there between this act and what he's done before in his public ministry? Who gets offended at the company that Jesus keeps, and what is the source of their offense? What “political” weight is added to the “moral” character of this crowd, and why is that distinction itself ill-fitting for ancient Palestine?

When Jesus utters his famous line about the physician, what Old Testament echoes is he drumming up, and why do the *grammateis* (scribes or letter-men) and the *pharasaioi* (pious ones) miss his point?