

Mark: The Mysterious Messiah

Week 4 Mark 2:18-2:28

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?

Mark 2:18-22 feature a trio of literary images (not called parables here, take note) that get at Jesus's relationship with the dominant forms of Judaism. What observation about Jesus and his followers triggers this indirect response? What places does this particular Jewish practice seem to have in the way that Jesus's questioners live?

What do the three images have in common, and what seems to be the common thread among them? What do they have to do with fasting?

Mark 2:23-28 notes what part of the Torah Jesus challenges, but what part of the Torah does he implicitly hold up as he and his disciples go from here to there? When the Pharisees (pious or dedicated ones) object, what is their legal/interpretive ground for their objection? When Jesus cites the story he cites, what Old Testament figure does he invoke as his analogue?

When Jesus calls himself Son of Man again here, what Old Testament figure does he once again call forth to explain his particular role in the history of Israel? What principle of Sabbath-observation does he invoke alongside that identification?

What dangers (and they are plural at least) does Jesus seem to be posing to the authorities of his historical moment up to this point? What promise does he represent to other sorts of people?