

## A Study of Mark 2

### I. Outline. From Headings in *NJKV*

1. A Paralytic is Healed (Mark 1.1-12; cf., Mt 9.1-8; Lk 5.17-26).
2. Call of Matthew (13-17; cf, Mt 9.9-13; Lk 5.27-32)
3. Parable of Cloth and Wineskins (18-22; cf., Mt 9.14-17; Lk 5.33-39)
4. Controversy over Sabbath Work (23-28; cf., Mt 12.9-13; Lk 6.6-10).

### II. Summary.

This chapter and the first six verses of the next report incidents which, though not represented as happening at the same time, have all one aim: to exhibit Jesus as becoming an object of disfavor to the religious classes, the scribes and Pharisees. Sooner or later, and soon rather than later, this was inevitable. Jesus and they were too entirely different in thought and ways for good will to prevail between them for any length of time. It would not be long before the new Prophet would attract their attention. The comments of the people in Capernaum synagogue, doubtless often repeated elsewhere, on the contrast between His style of teaching and that of the scribes, would soon reach their ears, and would not tend to promote a good understanding. That was one definite ground of offence, and others were sure to arise [Bruce, A. B. (n.d.). *The Synoptic Gospels* (p. 349). New York: George H. Doran Company].

### III. Chronology.

**BIBLE PERIOD:** The Period of the Christ.

*If you are not familiar with the 15 Bible Periods, please click here:*

<https://maplehillchurchofchrist.files.wordpress.com/2018/05/15bibleperiods.pdf>

### IV. Key Words/Phrases to Study

- 2.1... **CAPERNAUM** –“Town in northern Israel along the shore of the Sea of Galilee and home to the apostle Peter (Matthew 8.14). It is not mentioned in the Old Testament (it was probably founded in the second century B.C.), but is significant in the gospels as the unofficial headquarters of Jesus’ ministry (Matthew 8.5; 17.24; Mark 1.21; 9.33; Luke 4.31; 7.1; John 2.12; 6.59). Jesus left His boyhood home of Nazareth to stay in Capernaum for a while after His baptism (Matthew 4.13). People considered Capernaum His hometown (Mark 2.1) and at one point it is referred to as ‘his own city’ (Matthew 9.1). This is the town where, among other teachings and miracles, Jesus healed the centurion’s servant (Matthew 8.5-13), Peter’s mother-in-law (Matthew 8.14-15), and a paralytic (Matthew 9.1-8), and declared Himself the bread of life (John 6.35-59). However, Jesus cursed the town for failing to believe in Him despite the many miracles He performed there (Matthew 11.23; Luke 10.15). This curse came to pass over the next few centuries, and by the eleventh century the town was abandoned” [Olive Tree Places of the Bible Module].
- 2.4... **THEY UNCOVERED THE ROOF WHERE HE WAS**—“**They uncovered the roof** (ἀπεστεγασαν την στεγην [*apestegasan tēn stegēn*]). They unroofed the roof (note paronomasia in the Greek and cognate accusative). The only instance of this verb in the N. T. A rare word in late Greek, no papyrus example given in Moulton and Milligan *Vocabulary*. They climbed up a stairway on the outside or ladder to the flat tile roof and dug out or broke up (ἐξορυξαντες [*exoruxantes*]) the tiles (the roof). There were thus tiles (δια των κεραμων [*dia tōn keramōn*], Luke 5:19) of laths and plaster and even slabs of stone stuck in for strength that had to be dug out. It is not clear where Jesus was (ὅπου ἦν [*hopou ēn*]), either downstairs, (Holtzmann) or upstairs (Lightfoot), or in the quadrangle (*atrium* or *compluvium*, if the house had one). “A composition of mortar, tar, ashes and sand is spread upon the roofs, and rolled hard, and grass grows in the crevices. On the houses

of the poor in the country the grass grows more freely, and goats may be seen on the roofs cropping it” (Vincent). **They let down the bed** (χαλωσι τον κραβαττον [*chalōsi ton kرابatton*]), historical present again, aorist tense in Luke 5:19 (καθηκαν [*kathēkan*]). The verb means to lower from a higher place as from a boat. Probably the four men had a rope fastened to each corner of the pallet or poor man’s bed (κραβαττον [*kرابatton*], Latin *grabatus*. So one of Mark’s Latin words). Matthew (9:2) has κλινη [*klinē*], general term for bed. Luke has κλινιδιον [*klinidion*] (little bed or couch). Mark’s word is common in the papyri and is spelled also κραββατος [*krabbatos*], sometimes κραβατος [*krabatos*], while W, Codex Washingtonius, has it κραββατον [*krabbaton*]” [Robertson, A. T. (1933). *Word Pictures in the New Testament* (Mk 2:4). Nashville, TN: Broadman Press].

- 2.5... **WHEN JESUS SAW THEIR FAITH**—“It is remarkable that all the three narratives call it ‘their faith’ which Jesus saw. That the patient himself had faith, we know from the proclamation of his forgiveness, which Jesus made before all; and we should have been apt to conclude that his four friends bore him to Jesus merely out of benevolent compliance with the urgent entreaties of the poor sufferer. But here we learn, not only that his bearers had the same faith with himself, but that Jesus marked it as a faith which was not to be defeated—a faith victorious over all difficulties. This was the faith for which He was ever on the watch, and which He never saw without marking, and, in those who needed anything from Him, richly rewarding” [Jamieson, Fausset, & Brown].
- 2.7... **WHO CAN FORGIVE SINS BUT GOD ONLY?**—“The story might have ended here (for in the joy of sins forgiven the man might not have cared whether he was healed physically or not) if it had not been for some *teachers of the law* who were there. They, quite correctly, observed to themselves that only God can forgive sins and so Jesus was committing blasphemy by assuming this right for himself. It never entered their heads to ask whether Jesus was more than mere man. The gospels make no secret of the insight of Jesus, and he, knowing their unspoken thoughts, asked a very obvious question: Was it easier to grant forgiveness or to grant healing? The unspoken answer was that there was no way to test the reality of forgiveness but a very easy way to test the reality of healing. To prove that he had the power to forgive, and as a sign of the kingdom, Jesus healed the paralysed man. There could be no argument about that. Again, amazement followed but not, apparently, faith in Jesus” [Carson, D. A., France, R. T., Motyer, J. A., & Wenham, G. J. (Eds.). (1994). *New Bible commentary: 21st century edition* (4th ed., p. 954). Leicester, England; Downers Grove, IL: Inter-Varsity Press].
- 2.10... **BUT THAT YE MAY KNOW THAT THE SON OF MAN HATH POWER ON EARTH TO FORGIVE SINS**—“Christ would perform a wonder that only God could perform, and then they would know that he had power to forgive sins. The deduction is justified that if one cannot perform such a miracle, then it is likewise true that he cannot forgive sins. True, one may SAY, "I absolve you"; but, since the power claimed in such an assertion is beyond the scope of human judgment to determine its truth or falsity, Christ here acknowledged the validity of the kind of test he proposed and to which he submitted” [Burton Coffman].
- 2.12... **THEY WERE ALL AMAZED, AND GLORIFIED GOD**—“**They were all amazed.** The verb is *existemi*, literally, ‘to stand out of.’ Our word ‘ecstasy’ comes from this word. A person in an ecstasy might just as well be standing out of his body so far as registering sense impressions is concerned. His attention is taken up with the one thing, that he notices nothing else. These people were in a sense taken out of their usual routine of sense impressions by the wonder of the miracle, and had their entire attention taken up with the marvelous cure, and this, to the point of being almost beside themselves. This was the intensity of their amazement” [Kenneth Wuest, *Word Studies in the Greek New Testament*].
- 2.14... **SITTING AT THE RECEIPT OF CUSTOM**—“The NET Bible translates SITTING AT THE RECEIPT OF CUSTOM as: SITTING AT THE TAX BOOTH, and explains the choice this way: “While ‘tax office’ is sometimes given as a translation for *telwnion*, this could give the modern reader a false impression of an indoor office with all its associated furnishings. Actually the TAX

BOOTH was a booth located on the edge of a city or town to collect taxes for trade. There was a tax booth in Capernaum, which was on the trade route from Damascus to Galilee and the Mediterranean. The TAXES were collected on produce and goods brought into the area for sale, and were a sort of SALES TAX paid by the seller, but obviously passed on to the purchaser in the form of increased prices (L&N, 57183). It was here that Jesus met Levi (also named Matthew [cf., Mt 9.9]) who was ultimately employed by the Romans, though perhaps more directly responsible to Herod Antipas. It was his job to collect taxes for Rome and he was thus despised by Jews who undoubtedly regarded him as a traitor.”

- 2.15... **MANY PUBLICANS AND SINNERS SAT ALSO TOGETHER WITH JESUS AND HIS DISCIPLES: FOR THERE WERE MANY, AND THEY FOLLOWED HIM**—“‘Sinners’ was a general term that could refer to those Jews who failed to live in accordance with the dictates of the Pharisees, but could also include those who were involved in deeper sin. Some were simply those who were not careful about avoiding ritual defilement, but others were those who were guilty of grave sins such as adultery or theft (although not necessarily present at Levi’s gathering). All were lumped together by the Pharisees. To share meals with such was looked on by the Pharisees as abhorrent. Such people did not keep themselves ritually clean. Thus Jesus would be seen as courting the possibility of defilement and as mixing with unfit people. We should note that these people were FOLLOWERS. Jesus was not going ‘partying.’ He knew that their hearts were moved and that they were seeking Him” [Peter Pett, *Commentary Series on the Bible*, An e-Sword Module].
- 2.16... **HOW IS IT THAT HE EATETH AND DRINKETH WITH PUBLICANS AND SINNERS?**—“A feast of the size indicated here was probably held in the courtyard of the house, leaving passers-by an opportunity to observe all that was done. For a long while the Pharisees had opposed Jesus; and their cunning and craft were evident in their maneuvers here to open a wedge between the Lord and his disciples” [Burton Coffman].
- 2.19... **CAN THE CHILDREN OF THE BRIDECAMBER FAST, WHILE THE BRIDEGROOM IS WITH THEM?**—“In Jesus’ illustration, the ‘friends of the bridegroom’ were the attendants the bridegroom selected to carry out the festivities. That certainly was not a time to fast, which was usually associated with mourning or times of great spiritual need. Jesus’ point was that the ritual practiced by John’s disciples and the Pharisees was out of touch with reality. There was no reason for Jesus’ followers to mourn and fast while enjoying the unique reality that He was with them” [*The MacArthur Study Bible*, p., 1462].
- 2.22... **NO MAN PUTTETH NEW WINE INTO OLD BOTTLES**—“The latter word brings to one’s mind the idea of glass bottles. The Greek word is ‘wineskins.’ These were made of the skins of animals. In the case of glass containers of wine, the corks would come out and the bottles would not burst. But it is easy to see that containers made of animal skins could easily burst under the pressure of newly-fermenting wine. It is important to adequately translate the word here, lest a thoughtful Bible student run up against a difficulty. ‘Old’ is again palaios (παλαιος), referring to worn-out wineskins. ... The same teaching is found in this parable as in the previous one, the co-mingling of the new with the old, which renders both useless” [Kenneth Wuest].
- 2.28... **THE SON OF MAN IS LORD ALSO OF THE SABBATH**—“Jesus claimed He was greater than the Sabbath, and thus was God. Based on that authority, Jesus could in fact reject the Pharisaic regulations concerning the Sabbath and restore God’s original intention for Sabbath observance to be a blessing not a burden” [*The MacArthur Study Bible*, p. 1463].

V. **Lessons & Applications.** The following lessons from Mark 2 are pointed out by Leslie G. Thomas in the book: *Companion Annual Lesson Commentary*, 1984-1985, on page 107...

1. God supplies man with his every need.
2. What man desires is not always what he needs.
3. Man’s deepest need is the removal of sin.
4. God knows our hearts and thoughts (reasonings).

- 5. There is no forgiveness possible for the unbelieving and disobedient.
- 6. We can know that Jesus can forgive sins.
- 7. We can know when our sins are forgiven.
- 8. Man must reason properly (draw conclusions which are demanded by the evidence).
- 9. Faith is based upon necessary and sufficient evidence

**VI. Questions.**

**True or False**

- 01. \_\_\_\_\_ The name of Levi’s father is not mentioned.
- 02. \_\_\_\_\_ There is a sense in which FAITH can be seen.
- 03. \_\_\_\_\_ What David did in the days of Abiathar was not lawful.
- 04. \_\_\_\_\_ It was common practice in the first century to sew a piece of new cloth on to an old garment.
- 05. \_\_\_\_\_ Jesus was accused by the scribes of speaking blasphemies.

**I Found it in Verse(s)**

- 06. \_\_\_\_\_ Name of the place where the palsied man was healed.
- 07. \_\_\_\_\_ Name of those who believed picking and eating a little corn on the Sabbath was not lawful.
- 08. \_\_\_\_\_ Jesus could tell what men were reasoning in their hearts.
- 09. \_\_\_\_\_ Something both John’s disciples and the Pharisees did.
- 10. \_\_\_\_\_ Descriptive term of the number of publicans and sinners who followed Jesus.

**Short Answer**

- 11. The palsied man was told by Jesus to do this:  
\_\_\_\_\_
- 12. How many were carrying the palsied man to Jesus? \_\_\_\_\_
- 13. What King David ate that he shouldn’t have: \_\_\_\_\_
- 14. Where Levi was sitting when Jesus called him:  
\_\_\_\_\_
- 15. Where new wine needs to be put: \_\_\_\_\_

*Each Question is worth 7 Points*

**My Score is:** \_\_\_\_\_

*Answers will be found on next week’s handout*

**ANSWERS to Mark 1 Questions...** 01—True (41); 02—True (11); 03—False (8); 04—True (19); 05—False (29-30); 06—22; 07—38; 08—1; 09—35; 10—14; 11—camel’s hair—girdle of a skin—locusts and wild honey (6); 12—publish (45); 13—Fishers, men (16-17); 14—Hold thy peace, and come out of him (25); 15—They brought to Jesus all that were diseased and possessed with demons.

**VII. Seek-A-Word Puzzle.** The words may be backwards, diagonal, upside down, etc. See if you can find them all. The more you use the words of the Bible, the greater blessed you will be! You might be surprised at how much this little exercise will help you retain important truths. THANK YOU for the good effort you are putting forth in Bible study. –DRL

A S I N N E R S E J Y  
M A N Y A A H M J R D  
C B F O L L O W R J U  
U B O W S C U P T Y U  
L A R T O A S H N S M  
A T G P T C E A E L M  
P H I R A L J R W A O  
M R V M T S E I R P D  
I M E S K H S S A I D  
S H A C T C U E I R O  
A F I S I N S E T R S  
Y S E L P I C S I D A

<b>ALSO</b>	<b>ARISE</b>	<b>BOTTLES</b>	<b>CAME</b>	<b>COME</b>
<b>DISCIPLES</b>	<b>FAST</b>	<b>FOLLOW</b>	<b>FORGIVE</b>	<b>HOUSE</b>
<b>JESUS</b>	<b>MANY</b>	<b>PALSY</b>	<b>PASS</b>	<b>PHARISEES</b>
<b>PRIEST</b>	<b>REASON</b>	<b>SABBATH</b>	<b>SAID</b>	<b>SICK</b>
<b>SINNERS</b>	<b>SINS</b>	<b>THERE</b>	<b>WENT</b>	



**IX. EXTRA CREDIT FOR “SUPER” Bible Students...**

*Will you please consider answering these three SIMPLE questions based on the Bible text of this chapter? I will try to make use of your answers. Bring them with you next week. Tear out this last sheet from the Study Guide and be prepared to put it in a basket. I think it will be a great help to all of those in the class if you will do so. Thank you in advance for your marvelous cooperation!*

**W O R D: What word would you like to know more about in this chapter?**

**W O N D E R: I wonder what this phrase, verse, or series of verses means...**

**W I S H: I wish myself—or others whom I know or even don’t know—would understand this fact, principle, or concept from this chapter...**