



THE GOSPEL OF
MARK





1. Jesus heals a paralytic
2. Jesus calls Levi
3. Jesus speaks on fasting
4. Jesus is Lord of the Sabbath
5. Jesus heals a man with a withered hand
6. What is going on under the surface of all these stories?



Jesus heals a paralytic

1 And when he returned to Capernaum after some days, it was reported that he was at home. **2** And many were gathered together, so that there was no more room, not even at the door. And he was preaching the word to them. **3** And they came, bringing to him a paralytic carried by four men. **4** And when they could not get near him because of the crowd, they removed the roof above him, and when they had made an opening, they let down the bed on which the paralytic lay. **5** And when Jesus saw their faith, he said to the paralytic, **“Son, your sins are forgiven.”**



Jesus heals a paralytic

⁸ And immediately Jesus, perceiving in his spirit that they thus questioned within themselves, said to them, “**Why do you question these things in your hearts?** ⁹ **Which is easier, to say to the paralytic, ‘Your sins are forgiven,’ or to say, ‘Rise, take up your bed and walk’?** ¹⁰ **But that you may know that the Son of Man has authority on earth to forgive sins**”—he said to the paralytic— ¹¹ **“I say to you, rise, pick up your bed, and go home.”** ¹² And he rose and immediately picked up his bed and went out before them all, so that they were all amazed and glorified God, saying, “**We never saw anything like this!**”



Jesus calls Levi

14 And as he passed by, he saw Levi the son of Alphaeus sitting at the tax booth, and he said to him, **“Follow me.”** And he rose and followed him.

15 And as he reclined at table in his house, many tax collectors and sinners were reclining with Jesus and his disciples, for there were many who followed him. **16** And the scribes of the Pharisees, when they saw that he was eating with sinners and tax collectors, said to his disciples, **“Why does he eat with tax collectors and sinners?”** **17** And when Jesus heard it, he said to them, **“Those who are well have no need of a physician, but those who are sick. I came not to call the righteous, but sinners.”**



Jesus calls Levi

Nedarim 3:4

This passage, along with several other rabbinic texts from Palestine, regards Roman tax as illegal, and considers the collectors of Roman tax and customs (Jews or Gentiles) as robbers and thieves. Therefore, the text permits a person to deceive them in order to avoid paying tax or customs. Since Rome allowed the Jews to tithe produce for the benefit of the temple and the priests, vowing that one's produce is a heave-offering may allow him to evade paying customs for this produce. Similarly one may vow that the produce belongs to the house of the king, and, therefore, be exempted from paying taxes.

Source: *Judaism and Rome commentary on Mishnah Nedarim 3:4*



Jesus speaks on fasting

18 Now John's disciples and the Pharisees were fasting. Some people came and asked Jesus, "How is it that John's disciples and the disciples of the Pharisees are fasting, but yours are not?"

19 Jesus answered, "How can the guests of the bridegroom fast while he is with them? They cannot, so long as they have him with them. **20** But the time will come when the bridegroom will be taken from them, and on that day they will fast.

21 "No one sews a patch of unshrunk cloth on an old garment. Otherwise, the new piece will pull away from the old, making the tear worse. **22** And no one pours new wine into old wineskins. Otherwise, the wine will burst the skins, and both the wine and the wineskins will be ruined. No, they pour new wine into new wineskins."



Jesus is Lord of the Sabbath

²³ One Sabbath he was going through the grainfields, and as they made their way, his disciples began to pluck heads of grain. ²⁴ And the Pharisees were saying to him, “Look, why are they doing what is not lawful on the Sabbath?” ²⁵ And he said to them, “Have you never read what David did, when he was in need and was hungry, he and those who were with him: ²⁶ how he entered the house of God, in the time of Abiathar the high priest, and ate the bread of the Presence, which it is not lawful for any but the priests to eat, and also gave it to those who were with him?” ²⁷ And he said to them, “The Sabbath was made for man, not man for the Sabbath.²⁸ So the Son of Man is lord even of the Sabbath.”



Jesus heals a man with a withered hand

¹ Again he entered the synagogue, and a man was there with a withered hand. ² And they watched Jesus, to see whether he would heal him on the Sabbath, so that they might accuse him. ³ And he said to the man with the withered hand, “Come here.” ⁴ And he said to them, “Is it lawful on the Sabbath to do good or to do harm, to save life or to kill?” But they were silent. ⁵ And he looked around at them with anger, grieved at their hardness of heart, and said to the man, “Stretch out your hand.” He stretched it out, and his hand was restored. ⁶ The Pharisees went out and immediately held counsel with the Herodians against him, how to destroy him.



- 1. Jesus brings wholeness to the lives of people, not only restored health but a restored heart and soul, he forgives their sins**
- 2. Jesus welcomes the universally despised, not only that but he befriends them**
- 3. Jesus is up to something new, worthy of a party and full of celebration**
- 4. Jesus brings a freedom that can't be contained by rules**
- 5. Jesus cares for people more than strict religiosity**



The dangers below the surface

- 1. You can miss who Jesus is.**
- 2. Not loving the people that Jesus loves**
- 3. Being blindfolded by religion**



The invitations

1. **I say to you, rise, pick up your bed, and go home.**
2. **Come here... stretch out your hand.**
3. **Follow me.**



Reflect

- 1. What are some practical ways in which we can follow Jesus' examples in these stories?**
- 2. In what ways are we demonstrating faith on behalf of our friends? (i.e. The actions of the friends of the paralytic man)**
- 3. How does Jesus' ministry differ from that of the religious scribes, Pharisees and Herodians? (i.e. places, methods, people)**
- 4. Do we have any religious traditions that hurt us rather than help us?**

