



# Epiphany 7 B

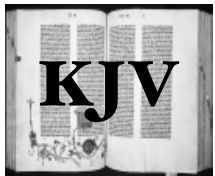
ARTICLE NO. 2006.206

Gospel

Mk 2:1-12

## It's about Power and Love - (the man with palsy)

Mr 2:1-12.



And again he entered into Capernaum after some days; and it was noised that he was in the house. 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.

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

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

But there were certain of the scribes sitting there, and reasoning in their hearts, Why doth this man thus speak blasphemies? who can forgive sins but God only? 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? 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? 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,) I say unto thee, Arise, and take up thy bed, and go thy way into thine house. 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.

### Notes:

When Jesus saw their faith... nevertheless only the sick man was forgiven his sins.

when Jesus perceived in his spirit ... The Holy Spirit connected Jesus to these scribes who must have been in a state of grace, for if they had been "dead" spiritually, there could have been no such communication. I think that these scribes were not against Jesus, but they did question who He was.

the Son of man hath **power on earth**... this phrase occurs only here, and for the same event in Matthew, and Luke.

The Greek word for **power** is translated as **authority** most of the time, and it is translated thus in the RSV.



Glen Miller



## It's about power and Love

What were the **scribes** doing there? Whose side were they on? Could some of them be on Jesus's staff, recording the events, and what He said? The word "certain" usually indicates that they were known by name. Everyone was trying to guess who he was. He was a healer by reputation and a preacher of the word (which meant the Torah). The audience was Jewish. I think that these scribes were writing the original of what we now have in the Gospels. How else could we know what was in Jesus thoughts, unless he told someone at the event?

Jesus, in forgiving the man, was stating his present condition; that his sins had already been forgiven as a result of his righteousness (*Jesus saw their faith*). And it was God which masterminded this confrontation.

It as if God had communicated to the sick man: "My child, go to my Son, He can heal you. Make sure that you make a "big entrance", I want everyone to know about this, so don't enter by the door, take the roof off!"

And the man believed God, because of the faith that God had given him. And so he went, and he infused his belief into his four helpers, and they lifted him into the house, and laid him in front of Jesus.

Jesus compares the sick man, whose heart was full of trust and belief, with these *certain scribes* whose hearts were stuffed with the letter of the Law. Jesus made his claim to be both God and man. The scribes knew that men were capable of healing the sick miraculously, but only God could forgive sins. Jesus said, just as man uses God's power to heal the sick on command, he can also call on God power to forgive men their sins. <sup>A</sup>. And they *glorified God* (which shows they understood Jesus to be **empowered** by God).

<sup>A</sup> The Jews believed that some illness was due to sins (transgressions of the Law), either of the parents or of the man.

Matthew, Mark and Luke have almost identical reports of this event

(Mt 9:6) But that ye may know that the Son of man hath power on earth to forgive sins, (then saith he to the sick of the palsy,) Arise, take up thy bed, and go unto thine house.

(Mr 2:10,11).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,) I say unto thee, Arise, and take up thy bed, and go thy way into thine house.

(Lu 5:24) .But that ye may know that the Son of man hath power upon earth to forgive sins, (he said unto the sick of the palsy,) I say unto thee, Arise, and take up thy couch, and go

Some scribes were sympathetic to Jesus

Then certain of the scribes and of the Pharisees answered, saying, Master, we would see a sign from thee. (Mt 12:38).

And he asked the scribes, What question ye with them? (Mr 9:16).

And one of the scribes came, and having heard them reasoning together, and perceiving that he had answered them well, asked him, Which is the first commandment of all? (r 12:28).

And Jesus answered and said, while he taught in the temple, How say the scribes that Christ is the Son of David? (Mr 12:35).

Then certain of the scribes answering said, Master, thou hast well said. (Lu 20:39).

The Son of Man or contributions to the study of the thoughts of

Abbot, Edwin A.

Cambridge

### More Insight

When you read this story, does not the relationship between Jesus and God the Father become more understandable? Do you see how close they are? Jesus gives a command, God does the work instantly. Jesus has God's freedom to call him any time. And God is always ready to answer Him. This is authority - this is power. Not that Jesus can do anything by himself, but only with God. The Word had slipped his hand from God, and given up the power that was His in heaven, in order to become like us.

The power Jesus had on Earth was that of being able to call on his Father for everything. And as Jesus was perfect and without sin, His Father was unhampered in giving Him whatever he asks.

We, under sin, and sometime sinners, being imperfect, and some with a belief as tiny as a grain of mustard seed, are naturally unfit to receive even the most trivial power that God has available for us. We pray and humble ourselves, and call on God for what we need. He is ready to shower us with gifts of all kinds, but He is hampered by the obstacles we put in His way.

To begin with, we don't give God enough time to transfer the gifts. They must be infused into our soul and mind at a rate no faster than we are able to handle the changes that these gifts will make in our lives.

How much time do you give to God, so that He can do this? How long can you meditate on God's word before you become distracted? - five minutes, an hour? Is five hours a day of meditation on God's word, enough time?

Are you simplifying your life and avoiding avarice? Can you reduce consumption, and give away those goods that take time away from God? What are you doing to reduce your worries? Are you able to forget every bad thing that happened to you? Do you harbor any ill feelings towards anyone? Are you able to say about any future event "if God wills it". Are you ready to repent (change your life) ? How can God take you seriously, if you aren't cooperating?

But when the multitudes saw it, they marvelled, and glorified **God, which had given such power unto men.** (Mt 9:8).

Jesus answered, **Thou couldst have no power at all against me, except it were given thee from above:** therefore he that delivered me unto thee hath the greater sin. (oh 19:11).

Then he called his twelve disciples together, and **gave them power and authority** over all devils, and to cure diseases. (Lu 9:1).

But as many as received him, **to them gave he power** to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name: (Joh 1:12).

And Jesus answering said, O faithless and perverse generation, how long shall I be with you, and suffer you? Bring thy son hither. And as he was yet a coming, the devil threw him down, and tare him. And Jesus rebuked the unclean spirit, and healed the child, and delivered him again to his father. And they were all amazed at **the mighty power of God.** But while they wondered every one at all things which Jesus did, he said unto his disciples, (Lu 9:41-43).

### Doing Theology

In the scriptures are instructions for preparing man to receive the full power of God. We, the body of Christ, are predestined to utilize God's power for the betterment of the poor and oppressed - to give them hope; to help them believe; to show them how they can let go a death grip on the world, and reach towards God, to share some part of this awesome power. Reading the scriptures should lift a man's soul to heavenly places, not bring it down to earth.

Is it not a fact, that most of our "bible" teachers discuss worldly issues - of how to use the scriptures for advice with: problem children, illness, shortage of funds, old wounds, marriage problems, how to succeed in this world. Do they talk about the history, geography, sociology, and archaeology of the bible lands? - Aren't all these things "worldly"?

Will God judge us by the merits of things which are external to us? Will our knowledge of geography, sociology, history and archaeology, count for anything with God? If we die penniless, without recognition, alone and unfulfilled, does God think the worse of us?

We must let go the "worldly interests" and reach out for the great prize, **the Crown of Life**, which is a Gift of God for those who are righteous to the end. And these two great virtues: to love God with all our heart soul and mind, and to love our neighbours as ourselves, are the fulfillment of our quest - God's ultimate gift to us. "On these two commandments **hang** all the Law and the Prophets." We who are still on the ground, are unable to receive this gift from our vantage point. We must climb through the scriptures with God's power and God's love, to be ultimately handed **the crown of life**. It is only then that we will receive in our heart, soul and mind, the gift of true love for God, and love for neighbour.

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. (u 5:17).

And Jesus returned in the **power of the Spirit** into Galilee: and there went out a fame of him through all the region round about. (Lu 4:14).

And Jesus said, I am: and ye shall see the Son of man **sitting on the right hand of power**, and coming in the clouds of heaven. (Mr 14:62).

**The crown of life** given to a man on the day he is tried. (Jas 1:12).

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