

Mark Dispensationally Considered

**Mark 2:21-28: The Parable of the
Wine Bottles**

Mark 2:21-22

- Luke 5:36 (1079)—explicitly tells us that this story is a parable. This is the first time we have encountered a parable in our study through the gospel of Mark.
- Matthew 13:3, 10-17 (1014)—Jesus taught using parables so that only those to whom they were given would understand. Christ tells us that the reason he did this was to fulfilled what was spoken by the prophet Isaiah.
 - Isaiah 6:9-10 (718)—Jesus was speaking in parables so that certain people would not understand his message
 - Romans 15:8 (1208)—this is yet another example of the nature of our Lord’s earthly ministry.
- Mark 2:21—uses the illustration of patching clothes. Where the new piece of garment meets the old there is a natural weakness which threatens the integrity of the entire garment.
 - Matthew 9:16
 - Luke 5:36

Mark 2:21-22

- Mark 2:22—likewise this verse uses the illustration of bottling wine. If new wine is not put in new bottles the fermentation process will bust the bottles and both the wine and the bottles will be lost. Therefore, new wine must be placed in new bottles.
 - Matthew 9:17 (1007)
 - Luke 5:37-38 (1078)
- Charles F. Baker, author of *Understanding the Gospels A Different Approach* gives the standard way most commentators view this parable. Baker writes, “The old speaks of the legal system of the Law. The main difference between the Old Covenant and the New is the fact that in the former God’s laws were external, written on tables of stone: in the New the law is internal, written on the tables of the heart. The Old commanded, the New entreats. The old said, “This do and thou shalt live,” the New says, “Because you now live, do.” As Paul puts it in II Corinthians 3:6 the letter of the Law kills; the Spirit, the New, gives life. Wine is a symbol of joy, and the joy of those who were joined to Christ could not be restricted to the confines of the old wineskins of the Law. The Law works wrath, but Jesus had come that their joy might be full (John 15:11).” (73-74)

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- While this is useful and instructive I don't think this is the primary meaning of the parable.
- When you consider the reasons given for speaking in parables I think the parable is discussing the relationship of the Little Flock with the rest of Israel.
- Mark 1:1-8 (1045)—we have already spoken at length in this series about the true nature of John the Baptists ministry in preparing a people ready for the Lord. We have studied how the preaching of the Gospel of the Kingdom was drawing a line in the sand within Israel. This was God's mechanism for determining the true believers from the amongst the apostate religious nation.
- Luke 12:32 (1093)—according to Christ, who is going to receive the kingdom? The Little Flock of true believers.
- Matthew 21:33 (1028)—when compared with Isaiah 5:1-7 it is easy to identify what Christ is talking about.
 - Householder—God the Father
 - Vineyard—The Nation of Israel
 - Husbandmen—The leadership God established when he planted the vineyard

Mark 2:21-22

- Matthew 21:34-43 (1029)—the Kingdom of God is going to be taken from the original God ordained leadership and given to a nation that will bring forth the fruits there of, i.e., the Little Flock.
 - Matthew 3:8 (997)
- Luke 5:39 (1079)—is the key to understanding the parable in Mark 2. The Pharisees that the religious leaders of Israel don't want the new wine of Christ's message because they prefer the old wine.
- That is why you have to put new wine in new wine bottles. The old bottles don't want and can't handle the new wine. Likewise you cannot just patch up these old garments with a new patch you need get an entirely new garment.
- Through this parable Christ is speaking about the relationship of his message with the nation at large. He must place it into new bottles or else no one would get it.

Mark 2:23-28

- Luke 6:1 (1079)—in America corn means Indian corn that grows on cobs. In England corn means the edible seeds of cereal plants, such as wheat, barley, rye, or oats. The disciples were hungry and began to pluck ears or heads of the grain, rubbing the heads in their hands to remove the husks, and probably tossing it into the air to winnow it before eating it. (Baker, 77)
- Mark 2:24—there would have been nothing unlawful about this on an ordinary day, but according to Rabbinic statutes, any one of these activities was unlawful on the Sabbath.
- Mark 2:25-26—in response Jesus quoted two examples from Scripture of law breaking which had God approval.
- Matthew, Mark, and Luke all record David eating the showbread in the temple.
 - Matthew 12:3-5 (1012)
 - Luke 6:3-4 (1079)

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- I Samuel 21:6 (343)—David had been anointed by Samuel to be the King over Israel in the place of Saul whom God had rejected. The Spirit of the Lord departed from Saul and an evil spirit troubled him, and Saul tried to kill David. It was while David, the anointed King was thus rejected that he and his men were hungry and were given the showbread to eat. In like manner, Jesus, the rejected King, and his disciples were hungry and plucked heads of grain on the Sabbath.
- Matthew 12:5 (1012)—Matthew alone records the other instance of sanctioned law breaking on the Sabbath. The labor the priests perform in the temple on the Sabbath.
 - Numbers 28:9-10 (204)—the priests had to offer the burnt offering every Sabbath

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- Matthew 12:6 (1012)—Matthew also records Christ's claim to be greater than the temple. Everything in the temple itself was a type or foreshadowing of Christ.
- Mark 2:27—Mark is the only gospel writer to pen this verse.
 - Genesis 2:1-3 (6)
 - Exodus 16:23-29 (90), 20:8-11, 31:14-17
 - Leviticus 25:1-11
- Mark 2:28—since the Sabbath was made for man and not man for the Sabbath, Christ as the Son of Man is Lord of the Sabbath. Once again all the doctrine the Sabbaths were supposed to teach is fulfilled in Christ.