

So far in this thread I have argued that Mark 1:41 originally said that Jesus got angry when the leper asked him to heal him; and I have shown that elsewhere in Mark's Gospel Jesus gets angry in context involving healing. And so: if Jesus got angry when the leper asked for healing in Mark 1:41 - what exactly was he angry about? Over the years numerous interpretations have been proposed, and some of these explanations are highly creative.

Some interpreters have argued that Jesus became angry because he knew that the man would disobey orders, spreading the news of his healing and making it difficult for Jesus to enter into the towns of Galilee because of the crowds. The problem with this view is that it seems unlikely that Jesus would be angry about what the man would do later — before he actually did it! Other have suggested that he was angry because the man was intruding on his preaching ministry, keeping him from his primary task. Unfortunately, nothing in the text says anything about this as a problem, and it seems odd as an interpretation in Mark's Gospel in particular, where healings and exorcisms play so much a greater role than preaching.

Others have suggested that Jesus was angry with the leper for breaking the Law by coming up to him to be healed, instead of avoiding human contact and calling out "unclean, unclean" as the Law commands (Lev. 13:45). But this does not seem to work, since it fails to explain why Jesus himself would then have broken the Law, by physically touching the person.

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