



POWER ENCOUNTER

MARK 1:21-28 LESSON

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MARK 1:21-28 POWER ENCOUNTER



- After defending Himself against Satan's temptations/tests in the wilderness (Mk 1:12-13), Jesus now goes on the **offensive** (Evans, 94)
- Jesus – the King -- is destroying Satan's kingdom, clearing the way for the kingdom of God that He proclaims (cf. Mk 1:14-15; Evans, 94) – which will restore all creation (Bock, 414) from sin and death
- As with the call of His first disciples (Mk 1:16-20), Jesus' **authority** is made manifest (Kernaghan, 45; Witherington, 87).
- First with words (Mk 1:16-20) and then with works (Mk 1:21-28; Brooks, 51; cf. Stein, 83).
- The One who **calls** with authority also **teaches** (Garland, 70) and drives out demons with authority



MARK 1:21-28 POWER ENCOUNTER



- Most of Jesus' miracles in Mark occur in the first half (Bock, 413) and make up almost half of the narrative (47%; Witherington, 92 cf. Bock, 413). Mark devotes more relative space to miracles than any other gospel writer (Brooks, 51)
- Of Jesus' 17 miracles in Mark (Brooks, 51; though people count differently), 4 are individual exorcisms (cf. Mk 1:23-27, 5:1-20, 7:24-30, 9:14-29) (France, 100; cf. Witherington, 92; Bock, 413; Stein, 83)
- Christ's exorcisms are also often mentioned in several summary statements (Mk 1:32-34, 39, 3:11, 22-30, 6:7; Stein, 83)
- His disciples (Mk 6:13) and others (Mk 9:38) also drive out demons (Stein, 83)
- In a way, exorcisms are the most popular Marcan miracle (Bock, 413; Witherington, 92)
- Jesus' healings are another form of His **spiritual battle** against the powers of death (English, 56; Witherington, 95; Garland, 71) — and manifestations of the reign of God (Stein, 83).
- Ultimately, Jesus Himself triumphs over the power of death after His Resurrection (English, 56)
- By recounting this miracle **first**, Mark emphasizes that Jesus has come for **spiritual war** (Witherington, 90; Lane, 75; Strauss, 94; cf. Edwards, 56; Stein, 85)



MARK 1:21 CAPERNAUM: HOME BASE



- *And they entered into Capernaum and, straight away, on the Sabbath, having gone into the synagogue, He began to teach. (Mk 1:21, AT)*
- **They** = Jesus, Peter, Andrew, James, and John (cf. Mk 1:29; Lane, 71; Stein, 84; Schnabel, 56) — Jesus' inner circle (France, 101)
- A fishing town on the (north)west shore of the Sea of Galilee (Hurtado, 31; Bock, 412; cf. Stein, 84), which means “village of Nahum” in Hebrew (Hurtado, 31; Edwards, 52; Stein, 84; Strauss, 90)
- This was apparently the home base of Jesus' ministry (cf. Mt 4:13; Hurtado, 31; Witherington, 87; Brooks, 49; cf. Mk 2:1, 9:33; Edwards, 52; Jn 2:12; Stein, 84; Strauss, 90) where Peter, Andrew, James and John likely lived (Witherington, 87; Lane, 71; Strauss, 90)
- Was on a main trade route between Egypt and Mesopotamia (Brooks, 49; Stein, 84). Also, due to fertile fields and booming fishing industry, Capernaum flourished economically (Edwards, 52; cf. Stein, 84). May have had 10,000 people (France, 101; Stein, 84; contra Schnabel, 56)
- As far away as one could get from Tiberias (Herod's capital) and still remain in Galilee (Edwards, 52). Jesus was (initially) able to avoid problems from political and religious leaders (cf. Mk 1:14, 6:14-29; Edwards)



MARK 1:21 SYNAGOGUES



- Synagogues were places where Jewish communities would gather for prayer, study, and more (Keener, 131; Hurtado, 32; Bock, 412; Schnabel, 56)
- In Greek, word means “gathering” (Hurtado, 32) or “gathering place” (Edwards, 53); 10 adult Jewish men was the minimum (Hurtado, 32; Edwards, 53)
- Local synagogue leaders would invite visiting teachers to lecture, especially on the Sabbath (Keener, 131; Hurtado, 32; Brooks, 50; Schnabel, 57). Any man who had been approved by the synagogue leaders (cf. Ac 13:14-16; Schnabel, 57; Strauss, 90) could teach (Bock, 412; France, 101)
- Was likely Jesus’ custom to teach in synagogues (cf. Lk 4:15-16; Evans, 95). Before this, Jesus may have already been recognized as a teacher (Brooks, 50; France, 101; Stein, 85)
- Services would be led by “lay leaders” (Keener, 131; Hurtado, 32; Witherington, 87; Edwards, 53) — usually scribes (Witherington, 87). Services would include prayers, Scripture readings (OT), a translation in Aramaic (i.e., Targum, Strauss, 90) and/or Greek, (Witherington, 87) a sermon/homily (Hurtado, 32; Witherington, 87; Strauss, 90), and benedictions (Witherington, 87; Strauss, 90)



MARK 1:22 AWESOME AUTHORITY



- *And they were awestruck by His teaching, because He was teaching them as One having authority – and not like the scribes (Mk 1:22, AT)*
- Mark uses six (English, 53; Witherington, 92; Stein, 85) or seven different words to describe people's amazement (Bock, 412) (cf. Mk 1:27; 2:12; 4:41; 5:15, 20, 33, 36, 42; 6:50, 51; 9:6, 15, 32; 10:24, 32 (twice); Mk 11:18; 12:17; 15:5, 44; 16:5 ff., 8; English, 53; cf. Witherington, 92; Lane, 71; Brooks, 50)
- **Awestruck** (ἐκπλήσσω | *ekplēssō*): lit. to “strike out of one’s senses” (BDAG, 308). Can imply awe and alarm (Lane, 71)
- Many are **awestruck** by Jesus: the crowds in response to His teaching (Mt 7:28-29; Mk 1:22; Lk 4:32; NIDNTTE, 153; cf. Mt 22:33; Mk 11:18; Mt 13:54 par. Mk 6:2; EDNT, 420), His parents in response to His precocious presence in the Temple (Lk 2:48; NIDNTTE, 153; cf. EDNT, 420), in response to His healing (Mk 7:37; Lk 9:43; NIDNTTE, 153; cf. EDNT, 420; Hurtado, 27), and the disciples response to His tough teaching concerning the rich young ruler (Mt 19:25; Mk 10:26; NIDNTTE, 153; cf. EDNT, 420)
- Could be a **first step** toward faith (Bock, 412), but **amazement does not = faith!** (Hurtado, 27; Witherington, 92)



MARK 1:22

JESUS THE TEACHER



- In Mark, Jesus is often portrayed as a teacher (Evans, 95; Stein, 86; Schnabel, 57)
- He is called a teacher (*didaskalos*) 12 times, His teaching (*didache*) is mentioned 5 times, and He is said to have taught (*didaskō*) 15 times (Evans, 95; cf. English, 53; Brooks, 50; Guelich, 55)
- Jesus was called “rabbi” (Mk 9:5, 10:51, 11:21, 14:45) – a term given to scribes (EDNT, 260). Rabbi means “my great one” (Edwards, 54)
- Though other gospels are longer than Mark, Mark describes Jesus as a teacher more (France, 101; Stein, 86)
- Mark does not include as much of the **content** of Jesus’ teaching as the other Gospel writers (Brooks, 50; Strauss, 90)
- Mark, instead, has “pithy statements and dramatic action” (Garland, 70), which demonstrate the inbreaking Kingdom of God (Strauss, 90)



MARK 1:22

JESUS THE TEACHER – WITH AUTHORITY

- Jesus has authority to forgive sins (Mk 2:6; EDNT, 260; Mk 2:10; Hurtado, 26), cleanse the temple (Mk 11:28-33; Hurtado, 26; Stein, 89; Stein, 89) heal (Mk 1:29-34; Guelich, 56), preach (Mk 1:39; Guelich, 56) and interpret God the Father's will without relying on human traditions (cf. EDNT, 260)
- Jesus gives His disciples authority to drive out demons (Mk 3:15, 6:7; Hurtado, 26; cf. Mk 6:13 cf. Mk 9:38-40; France, 100; Stein, 89) – in His name (France, 100)
- Every instance of authority (ἐξουσία | *exousia*) in Mark reflects Jesus' authority – directly or indirectly (Edwards, 55)
- Here, we're not told **what** He taught but **how** He taught – with authority (Hurtado, 26; cf. English, 53; Witherington, 93; Cole, 113; Lane, 71; Brooks, 50; France, 102; Edwards, 56; Strauss, 91)
- Teaching likely concerns the inbreaking Kingdom of God (cf. Mk 1:15; Lane, 71; Strauss, 91). Not merely good advice or encouraging words – it is an “**exercise of power**” (Kernaghan, 45).
- Whereas scribes make theological judgments (Mk 2:6-7, 9:11, 12:35; Garland, 70) based on scribal traditions (Mk 7:8-13; Edwards, 55), Jesus teaches with divine authority (Garland, 70)
- Jesus authority as a teacher is mentioned **before** His authority as an exorcist (cf. Mk 1:27; Strauss, 88)



MARK 1:22

THE SCRIBES/TEACHERS OF THE LAW



- **Scribes** (γραμματεὺς | *grammateus*): originally referred to those who would make copies of a law (UBS, 46; cf. Stein, 86) – “clerk, secretary...” (NIDNTTE, 593) – or a sacred text (Bock, 412)
- Eventually referred to authoritative interpreters and scholars of the Law – experts (UBS, 46 cf. Hurtado, 26; Witherington, 90; Brooks, 50; Guelich, 56; Edwards, 54; Schnabel, 57-58; Strauss, 91), likely emerged during or after Babylonian exile (Hurtado, 32)
- Scribes also wrote down/interpreted legal documents for the village, and taught the Bible to children (Keener, 131) and students (Guelich, 56). People respected their expertise (Hurtado, 32; Garland, 70; Edwards, 54). Many people were not educated and could not read (Edwards, 53).
- Precursor of modern ordained rabbi (Hurtado, 32; Witherington, 87). Made judgments on the meaning and application of the Scriptures (Bock, 412; Guelich, 56), in addition to judgments on legal matters (Edwards, 54)
- Scribes would expound upon the Scripture after it was read by explaining proper translation or citing traditions (Keener, 131). Advanced scribes would cite earlier traditions, as many Pharisees did (Keener, 131).
- Scribes produced a large collection of oral traditions that applied to all facets of life (Hurtado, 32; cf. Witherington, 90; Brooks, 50; Strauss, 91), which eventually was put on the same level as the written OT Law (Hurtado, 32; Brooks, 50). Called the Mishnah (c.AD 200) (Strauss, 91)



MARK 1:22

THE SCRIBES/TEACHERS OF THE LAW



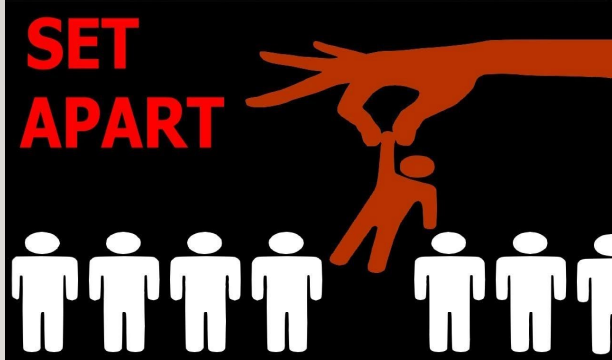
- Could belong to any Jewish group (Bock, 412) but were often Pharisees (cf. Mk 2:16; Bock, 412; cf. Guelich, 56; Lk 5:30; Ac 23:9; Stein, 86; often appear together cf. Mt 5:20, 12:38; Matthew 23; Mk 7:1, 5; Strauss, 91)
- Only the scribe who discusses the greatest commandment (Mk 12:28-34) is portrayed positively (EDNT, 260; Bock, 412; France, 102; Stein, 86)
- Scribes claim He is empowered by the devil (Mk 3:22; EDNT, 260). They often oppose Jesus (Mk 3:22, 7:1, 5, 8:31, 10:33, 14:1, 43, 53, 15:1, 31; Guelich, 56; Bock, 412; cf. Mk 2:6, 10; 11:27-29, 33; Witherington, 90; Strauss, 91). And eventually join the elders and chief priests in their plot to kill Jesus (Mk 8:31, 10:33, 11:18, 14:1, 43, 53, 15:1; Stein, 86; cf. Strauss, 91)
- Jesus authority far surpasses that of the scribes (Hurtado, 27 cf. Mk 1:21-27, 2:5-12, 11:27-33; Bock, 412; EDNT, 260). He does not cite scribal traditions (Cole, 113; Brooks, 50; Guelich, 56; Strauss, 91; cf. Lane, 71; Schnabel, 57). His authority was not **derivative**, but **direct** from God (Bock, 412; cf. Witherington, 90; Lane, 72; Garland, 70; Edwards, 55; Schnabel, 57; Strauss, 91)
- The scribes represent the “old régime, challenged by the fresh new teaching of Jesus” (France, 102; cf. Mk 2:21-22; Edwards, 54)

Sanctity



Set Apart as Holy

MARK 1:23 DEFILING (UNCLEAN) SPIRIT



- And straight away, in **their synagogue**, there was a man with a defiling spirit and it cried out (Mk 1:23, AT)
- **Defiling** (ἀκάθαρτος | *akathartos*): lit. “unclean” (NIDNTTE, 568; BDAG, 34), “impure” (EDNT, 218; NIDNTTE, 568; BDAG, 34). Could be physical impurity (UBS, 48) but likely refers to “moral impurity” (BDAG, 34) or “ceremonial... or spiritual defilement” (cf. Zec 13:2; UBS, 48; cf. Hurtado, 32; Brooks, 50; Garland, 80; Edwards, 57; cf. Schnabel, 58; Strauss, 91)
- Something/someone that was ceremonially unclean/defiled could not be used in service to God and must be kept away from His Presence and anything that is holy (Strauss, 91). Unclean is not about hygiene (Strauss, 92)
- The man has a spirit that makes him unclean (UBS, 48). People who are possessed are usually described as not having control of themselves (Mk 5:1-20; 9:14-27; Hurtado, 33; cf. Garland, 70). The spirits seek to do harm (Bock, 412) and oppose God’s purposes (Garland, 80)
- Demons were also called “unclean spirits” (Keener, 131; cf. Mk 1:34; Evans, 95; Guelich, 56). Mark uses “unclean spirit” and “demon” interchangeably (cf. Mk 1:34, 39, 3:22; also see “evil spirit” in Lk 7:21, 8:2; Hurtado, 32; cf. Brooks, 50; Mk 7:26, 28, 30; Guelich, 56; Edwards, 57; Stein, 87; Schnabel, 58; Strauss, 91).
- They are on the side of Satan who is also called Belial, Beliar (cf. 2 Cor 6:15; Evans, 95) or Beelzebul (Mk 3:22; Evans, 95) — who is their leader (cf. Mk 3:22-26; Hurtado, 32; English, 55; Strauss, 91)
- Mark refers to defiling spirits 11 times (Mk 1:23, 26-27, 3:11, 30, 5:2, 8, 13, 6:7, 7:25, 9:25; Bock, 412). Jesus’ ministry is an “attack upon these evil powers” (Hurtado, 27 cf. Bock, 412; Witherington, 90)



MARK 1:23

DEMONS AND DISEASE



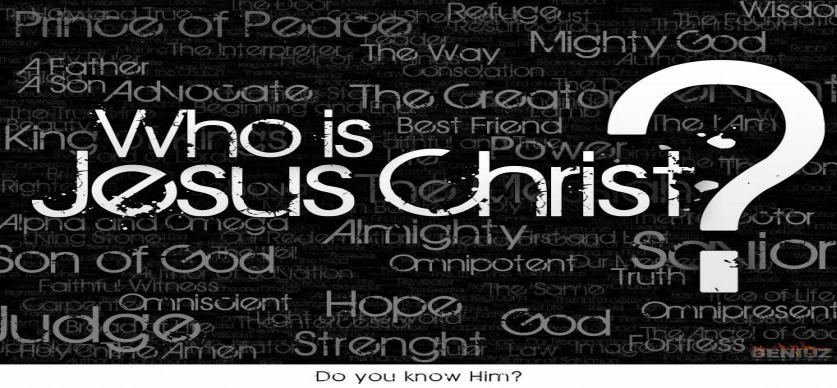
- Many NT accounts of demon possession appear to look like serious mental disorders (Hurtado, 33). However, demon possession and disease are distinguished (English, 56; Witherington, 90; Lane, 74). One condition is **spiritual**; one condition is **spiritual** (Garland, 80)
- 32 That evening after sunset the people brought to Jesus all the sick **and** demon-possessed. (Mk 1:32, NIV; Garland, 80)
- Demon possession is not simply a disease (Witherington, 91), nor a “primitive misdiagnosis” (Garland, 79). Modern medicine cannot account for everything non-spiritually (e.g., psychosomatic illness; (English, 56) or near-death experiences)
- Ancients reasoned that one’s spiritual condition can influence one’s physical, emotional, and/or mental condition (Witherington, 95)
- Jesus does not see various forms of uncleanness as contagious. He ministers to those who are troubled spiritually, physically, emotionally, etc. (Witherington, 95)
- Demonic possession is **evil** but **not sinful** (Garland, 80). The possessed are not offered forgiveness (Garland, 80). Demonic possession requires **divine intervention** (Garland, 80)

Mind
Your
Own
Business

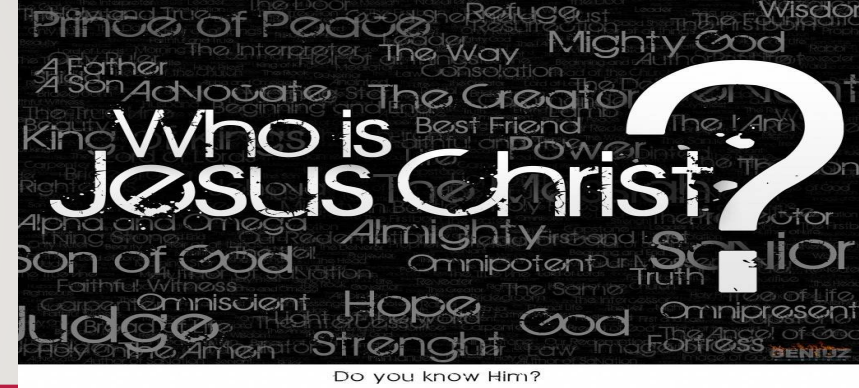
MARK 1:24 WHAT'S IT TO YOU?



- saying, "What do You have to with us, Jesus of Nazareth? Have You come to destroy us? I know who You are – the Holy One of God! (Mk 1:24, AT)
- Lit. "What to us and to you?" (UBS, 49; Strauss, 92): an expression which, in Hebrew, means "Why are You interfering with us?" (cf. Mk 5:7; Mt 8:29, 27:19; Lk 8:28; Jn 2:4; cf. LXX Judg 11:12, 2 Sam 16:10, 19:23; 1 Ki 17:18; UBS, 49; cf. Bock, 412; Witherington, 90; cf. 2 Ki 3:13; 2 Ch. 35:21; Is 3:15; 22:1; Jer 2:18; Hos 14:9; Lane, 73 (FN); Brooks, 50; Guelich, 56; France, 103; Edwards, 57; Stein, 87; Schnabel, 58; Strauss, 92). Basically: "Get out of my face!" or "Mind your own business!" (Strauss, 92)
- **Us:** could refer to multiple demons possessing the man (France, 103; Edwards, 57; cf. UBS, 49) But, likely speaking for all demons (UBS, 49; Witherington, 90; Guelich, 56; France, 103; Edwards, 57; Stein, 88; Schnabel, 58; Strauss, 92).
- **"Spiritual combat"** (Bock, 413; cf. English, 55; Witherington, 90; Garland, 70; Edwards, 57). Kingdom of God is "invading" the kingdom of Satan (Strauss, 92)
- Names would be invoked to subdue spiritual powers (Keener, 131; Bock, 413; Lane, 74; Garland, 71; France, 103; Evans, 95; Strauss, 92);
- The demon may be trying to subdue Jesus by invoking His name (Keener, 131; Evans, 95; Bock, 413; Witherington, 90; Lane, 74; Brooks, 50; Garland, 71; Guelich, 57; Edwards, 57; Schnabel, 58; Strauss, 92; contra Stein, 88). Or may just acknowledge His authority and therefore surrender (Evans, 95; Garland, 71; Guelich, 57; Stein, 88; Strauss, 92)



MARK 1:24 WHO IS JESUS?



- Whenever the **impure spirits** saw him, they fell down before him and cried out, “**You are the Son of God.**” (Mk 3:11, NIV; Hurtado, 27; Witherington, 91; Lane, 74; Guelich, 58; France, 104; Stein, 88; Strauss, 92)
- He shouted at the top of his voice, “What do you want with me, Jesus, **Son of the Most High God?** In God’s name don’t torture me!” For Jesus had said to him, “Come out of this man, you **impure spirit!**” (Mk 5:7-8, NIV; Hurtado, 27; Witherington, 91; Lane, 74; Guelich, 58; France, 104; Stein, 88; Strauss, 92)
- The demon knows both “Jesus’ earthly roots and his heavenly status” (English, 55; cf. Garland, 71)
- In contrast, we often see the **crowds** (Mk 2:12, 6:2-3, 7:37; Hurtado, 28) and the **disciples** (Mk 4:41, 6:49-52, 8:17-21, 32-33; Hurtado, 28) wondering/struggling with who Jesus is (Hurtado, 28)
- Many people get Jesus’ identity plain wrong (Mk 3:20-22, 6:14-16, 8:27-8; Hurtado, 28). Even after Peter’s great confession, it is clear that he does not fully understand (Mk 8:28-33; Hurtado, 28)
- No human (cf. Mk 1:11; Edwards, 57) truly gets it until His crucifixion (Mk 15:39; Brooks, 50; cf. Hurtado, 28).
- People recognized that demons had supernatural knowledge (Keener, 131); Irony: **Demons get it; people don’t** (Keener, 131; English, 56; Garland, 70; Stein, 88)

***THE HOLY
ONE OF GOD***

MARK 1:24 HOLY ONE OF GOD

JESUS
Holy One of God
— JOHN 6 —

- Could be a messianic title (cf. Lk 4:34; Jn 6:69; UBS, 50; but little evidence, Brooks, 50; contra Evans, 96)
- The angel answered, “The Holy Spirit will come on you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you. So the **holy one** to be born will be called the **Son of God.**” (Lk 1:35, NIV; Evans, 96; France, 104; cf. Lk 4:41; Stein, 88)
- We have come to believe and to know that you are the **Holy One of God.**” (Jn 6:69, NIV; Evans, 96; Witherington, 91; Guelich, 57; France, 104)
- Though this could be messianic (cf. Ac 3:14, 4:27; Evans, 96; France, 104; cf. Ac 2:27, 13:35; Strauss, 92), **Aaron** (Ps 105:16 LXX; Evans, 96; Bock, 413; France, 104; Strauss, 92), **Elisha** (LXX 2 Ki 4:9; Evans, 96; Bock, 413; France, 104; Strauss, 92), and **Samson** (LXX B Judg 16:17; Evans, 96; Edwards, 57) are also called holy (*hagios*) (Guelich, 57; cf. Is 40:25, 57:15; Dan 7:18-27; Bock, 413)
- “Holy One” was usually a title for God (Keener, 131; Brooks, 50; cf. Job 6:10, Ps 22:3, **Prov 9:10**, Is 40:25 or Holy One of Israel, Ps 71:22, Is 1:4, 32x in OT; Strauss, 92). Could mean “God’s right-hand agent” (Keener, 131)
- In any case, Jesus is recognized as a unique, individual with divine authority (Witherington, 91) and a special relationship with God (Brooks, 50; Guelich, 57; France, 104)
- The **unclean** spirit recognize the **Holy One of God** (Bock, 413; Witherington, 90; Lane, 73; Garland, 71; Guelich, 57; France, 104). Jesus, Who will baptize with the **Holy Spirit** (Mk 1:8), banishes this **unclean** spirit (Garland, 80; France, 104)



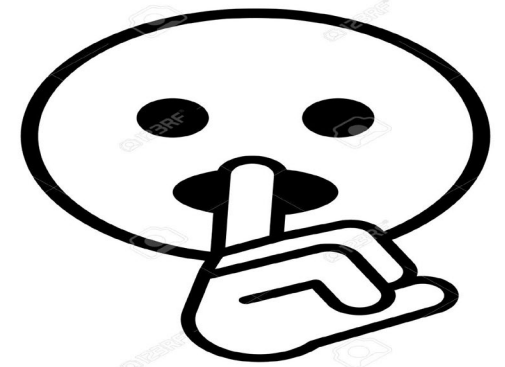
MARK 1:25 AUTHORITATIVE REBUKE



- And Jesus rebuked it saying, “Shut up! Come out of him!” (Mk 1:25, AT)
- Jesus rebukes (ἐπιτιμάω | *epitimaō*) demons (Mk 1:25, 9:25; NIDNTTE, 259; par. Mt 11:18; Lk 9:42; EDNT, 43), fevers (Lk 4:39; NIDNTTE, 259; EDNT, 43), Peter (Mk 8:30, 33; France, 104), and even storms (Mk 4:39; NIDNTTE, 259; EDNT, 43)
- 39 He got up, **rebuked** [*epitimaō*] the wind and said to the waves, “Quiet! Be still!” Then the wind died down and it was completely calm. (Mk 4:39, NIV; NIDNTTE, 259, 609; EDNT, 428; France, 104; Stein, 89)
- 9 He **rebuked** [*epitimaō*] the **Red Sea**, and it dried up; he led them through the depths as through a desert. (Ps 106:9, NIV; cf. Ps 105:9 LXX; NIDNTTE, 259)
- Some say this term was common in exorcism formulas (NIDNTTE, 259; cf. Edwards, 57; Stein, 89) but it was more of a technical term in Judaism (Hb. *gā‘ar*) by which God or His mouthpiece would **subdue** evil (France, 104; Edwards, 57; Stein, 89)
- And if I drive out demons by Beelzebul, by whom do your people drive them out? So then, they will be your judges. But if it is by the Spirit of God that I drive out demons, then **the kingdom of God has come upon you.** (Mt 12:28, NIV; EDNT, 43)



MARK 1:25 SHUT UP!



- **Shut up** (φιμώω | *phimoō*): lit. to “tie shut” (EDNT, 428), to “muzzle” (NIDNTTE, 608, UBS, 52); fig. to “silence” (NIDNTTE, 608; EDNT, 428, BDAG, 1060). May have been a common term used during exorcisms (Bock, 413; Guelich, 57; cf. Stein, 89)
- 18 For Scripture says, “Do not **muzzle** [*phimoō*] an ox while it is treading out the grain,” (1 Tim 5:18a, NIV; cf. Dt 25:4; Mt 22:12, 34; Lk 4:35; 1 Pet 2:15; EDNT, 428; cf. France, 104)
- 39 He got up, **rebuked** the wind and said to the waves, “Quiet! **Be still** [*phimoō*]!” Then the wind died down and it was completely calm. (Mk 4:39, NIV; NIDNTTE, 259, 609; EDNT, 428; Bock, 413)
- 11 Whenever the impure spirits saw him, they fell down before him and cried out, “You are the Son of God.” 12 But he **gave them strict orders not to tell others about him**. (Mk 3:11-12, NIV; Hurtado, 27)
- 34 and Jesus healed many who had various diseases. He also drove out many demons, but **he would not let the demons speak** because they knew who he was. (Mk 1:34, NIV; Hurtado, 27; Brooks, 50; France, 105; Stein, 88; Strauss, 92)
- Jesus likely did not want demonic testimony (Hurtado, 28; Kernaghan, 46) — they aren’t the best witnesses. Right answer, wrong source (Witherington, 91 cf. Brooks, 51; France, 105). Demons don’t have faith *in* Jesus (cf. Garland, 71). Demonic testimony could discredit Jesus (Brooks, 51) and lead others astray (Garland, 71).



MARK 1:25 MESSIANIC SECRET?



- Some think Jesus shuts the demon up because of the so-called “messianic secret” motif (English, 115; France, 105; Strauss, 93).
- Disciples are also told not to tell others who Jesus is (Mk 8:30, 9:9; Brooks, 51; France, 105; Schnabel, 58; Strauss, 93)
- People Jesus heals are told not to tell others who Jesus is (Mk 1:44, 5:43, 7:36; Brooks, 51; cf. Mk 8:26; France, 105; Schnabel, 58; Strauss, 93)
- Could be that Jesus did not want to gain fame as an exorcist/healer (Witherington, 93) or a military conqueror (Brooks, 51) since that might sidetrack Him from His main task of preaching the Good News of the kingdom of God (Witherington, 93; but also consider Mk 5:19; Brooks, 51)
- Until the crucifixion and the Resurrection, Jesus’ true identity could not be fully grasped (by people) (Brooks, 51 cf. Garland, 71). Jesus may have wanted to avoid “premature and misdirected” acclaim (France, 105; cf. Schnabel, 58; Strauss, 93)
- The secrecy motif is not necessarily present here (Witherington, 90, 93; Brooks, 51; uncertain, Stein, 89). Likely just stopping the demon’s defensive ritual (Witherington, 93; Lane, 75; France, 105)



MARK 1:25 AND GET OUT!



- Jesus and the disciples were not the only people who exorcised demons (France, 100)
- 27 And if I drive out demons by Beelzebul, **by whom do your people drive them out?** So then, they will be your judges. (Mt 12:27, NIV; France, 100)
- Phrases like “come out of ____” were often used during exorcisms, but as part of “elaborate magical incantations” (Keener, 131-132; cf. Evans, 96; Witherington, 91)
- There were various methods of exorcism:
 - Scaring/revulsion: like putting smelly root in the person’s nose to force the demon out (Keener, 132; Evans, 96)
 - Using magical potions, rings (Strauss, 94) incantations or invoking the name of a higher spirit to get rid of the lower spirit (Keener, 132)
- In contrast, Jesus simply gives the order (Keener, 132; Evans, 96; Bock, 413; Witherington, 91; Lane, 74; France, 104; Stein, 90; Strauss, 93)



MARK 1:26 ONE LAST GASP



- *And throwing him into convulsions and shrieking in a loud voice, the defiling spirit came out of him. (Mk 1:26, AT)*
- The demon caused the man to convulse (cf. Mk 9:26; Lk 9:39; Bock, 413).
- Word is also used in ancient literature to describe dogs and other animals **ripping** a victim open (Bock, 413)
- No physical symptoms of possession are mentioned here (France, 105)
- But demons often caused a commotion on the way out (Keener, 131) – as recorded in non-Christian ancient texts (France, 103). One last attempt to cause injury, and an indication of its exit (Strauss, 93)
- Unlike others, Jesus has **immediate** success (France, 105)
- This makes the kingdom of God more than some abstract ideal – Jesus provides an awesome manifestation of the reign of God – “God’s power (authority) in action” (Hurtado, 27)



MARK 1:27 ASTONISHING AUTHORITY



- *And they were all astonished. So they were disputing with one another saying, "What is this? A new teaching with authority! And He even commands the defiling spirits and they obey Him."* (Mk 1:27, AT)
- Astonish (θαμβέω | *thambeō*): can refer to **amazement** (NIDNTTE, 403; BDAG, 442; cf. Mk 10:24; Bock, 413) or **alarm/fear** (EDNT, 128, UBS, 129)
- Different word than in Mk 1:22, but the idea is similar (English, 53; Witherington, 92; Brooks, 50; France, 105; also see Mk 10:24, 32; Strauss, 93).
- Jesus commands; demons obey (Evans, 96). When Jesus speaks, something happens (Kernaghan, 46) – often a **confrontation** (Kernaghan, 46)
- 18th Century evangelist, George Whitefield, when asked how he knew he had preached a good sermon. He said, "Either someone **got saved** or someone **got angry**" (Kernaghan, 45).
- Apt description of what happens when Jesus preaches in Mark (Kernaghan, 45). Jesus shakes things up and provokes questions and reactions (Witherington, 92; cf. Lane, 73) (cf. Mt 10:34; Cole, 114)
- Jesus' teaching combines powerful words *and* powerful works (Kernaghan, 45; English, 53; Brooks, 50; Garland, 70; Guelich, 59). Words are mentioned first; works provide evidence (Strauss, 94)



MARK 1:27

AUTHORITATIVE ORDERS



- Jesus commands demons (Mk 1:27, 9:25; Lk 8:31; NIDNTTE, 461; cf. Lk 4:36; EDNT, 41) and forces of nature (Lk 8:25; NIDNTTE, 461; cf. Ps 89:10; 106:9; EDNT, 41; Mk 4:41; EDNT, 394)
- 25 “Where is your faith?” he asked his disciples. In fear and amazement they asked one another, “Who is this? He **commands** even the winds and the water, and they **obey** him.” (Lk 8:25, NIV; BDAG, 1029; EDNT, 41; NIDNTTE, 461)
- Jesus authoritative orders are like God (the Father)’s (cf. Gen 1:3, 9; EDNT, 41)
- This is something “new” – something the people had never seen before (Lane, 76)
- By proclaiming the kingdom of God in word and deed, Jesus was doing something “new” (cf. Guelich, 58, 60; Stein, 90)



MARK 1:28 FAME VS. FAITH



- *And, straight away, the report about Him went out all over the whole surrounding region of Galilee. (Mk 1:28, AT)*
- Villages of Galilee were close together with trade and family networks (Keener, 132). Word would spread quickly (Keener, 132).
- Fame spread (cf. Mk 1:33, 37, 45, 2:1-2, 3:7-9; France, 106; Strauss, 94), not necessarily faith (Hurtado, 28; Witherington, 92). Jesus' growing popularity among people will be shown to be relatively superficial (France, 106)
- Miracles are not "automatically persuasive" (Bock, 413 cf. English, 53; Cole, 115; Brooks, 51).
- Scribes think He drives out demons because He is possessed by a demon (Mk 3:22), people in His hometown don't believe (Mk 6:2-3), Herod thought He was John the Baptist back from the dead (Mk 6:14-16), and even His own disciples misunderstand who He is (Mk 6:52, 8:17-21; Bock, 413; Witherington, 93)
- 5 He looked around at them in anger and, deeply distressed at their stubborn hearts, said to the man, "Stretch out your hand." He stretched it out, and his hand was **completely restored**. 6 **Then** the Pharisees went out and began to **plot** with the Herodians **how they might kill Jesus**. (Mk 3:5-6, NIV; Bock, 413; Witherington, 93)



MARK 1:21-28

MARCAN MIRACLES



- Miracles create openness to faith, but not necessarily faith itself (Witherington, 92)
- One can believe **that** Jesus can perform miracles and yet not believe **in** Jesus as the Son of God (Witherington, 92)
- “Miracles are not the main thrust of Jesus’ ministry” (Witherington, 92). He does so “sparingly and selectively” (Cole, 115)
- In Mark, Jesus often does not seek people out to heal them, but performs miracles in *response* to (faithful) requests (Witherington, 92)
- Jesus usually heals people who have (at least some) faith in Him *already* (cf. Mk 9:24; Cole, 115)
- Miracles can increase the faith of those who already have it (Witherington, 92 cf. Brooks, 51)
- Exorcisms are **signs** of the **breaking down** of the reign of Satan; miracles are **signs** of the **inbreaking** reign of God (Brooks, 51)





MARK 1:21-28

SPIRITUAL BATTLE, TWO EXTREMES



- The NT actually has much less about demons than other literature from this time (Garland, 80; English, 55)
- The beginning of the reign of God is the **beginning of the end** of the reign of Satan (Garland, 80). Jesus' exorcisms are assaults on the devil's kingdom (Garland, 81; cf. Mk 3:27; Guelich, 59; Edwards, 57; Mk 1:7; Stein, 88; Strauss, 88). This is a cosmic battle, not a struggle of mere mortal authorities (Strauss, 94)
- The NT teaches that Jesus triumphs over Satan and the demonic powers on the cross (cf. Col 2:15; Strauss, 96; Garland, 80) and that the indwelling Holy Spirit protects God's people (Garland, 80) – we are not in a spiritual battle alone (Garland, 80), and the ultimate outcome is never in doubt (Strauss, 94)
- Some people attribute **everything** (evil deeds, suffering, disease, etc.) to demons (English, 56; Garland, 79; Strauss, 96)
- This can lead to the reduction of human accountability (English, 56; Strauss, 96; cf. Witherington, 95). Humans are not absolved of guilt just because we are influenced by evil spiritual beings (Witherington, 95; cf. Eph 2:1-3)
- Some people attribute **nothing** to demons (or any spiritual forces) (English, 56; Garland, 79; Strauss, 96) and live as practical atheists (Strauss, 96)
- “The greatest achievement of the powers of evil would be to **persuade us that they do not exist.**” (English, 56 cf. Witherington, 95)





MARK 1:21-28

POWER ENCOUNTER



- Jesus' authority is greater than that of the scribes; His authority is **divine** not **derivative**.
- When Jesus gives the order, demons obey (Evans, 96). Satan's power is no match (Strauss, 94). This prompts the all-important question: Who is this Jesus? (France, 106) People are amazed at His authority (Stein, 90) But amazement does not = faith!
- Jesus' authority as the Messiah (Christ) and Son of God is revealed to Marks' readers from the outset (Mk 1:1), recognized by John the Baptist as the fulfillment of Scriptures (Mk 1:2-8), recognized by God Himself after His baptism (Mk 1:9-11; cf. Evans, 96), demonstrated by withstanding Satan in the wilderness (Mk 1:12-13)
- Jesus proclaims the Good News of the inbreaking Kingdom of God – with authority (Mk 1:14-15; Evans, 96) and demonstrates His authority by summoning His first disciples (Mk 1:16-20; Evans, 96)
- Then demonstrates His authority in this power encounter with the powers of Satan (Evans, 96), manifesting the inbreaking Kingdom of God (Garland, 81) – which triumphs over demonic forces and restores humanity (Edwards, 58)
- His teaching is not merely about **principles**, but the **power** of the King (cf. Garland, 81; Edwards, 56). We still have access to His powerful teaching (Garland, 81)
- For our struggle is **not against flesh and blood**, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the powers of this dark world and against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms. (Eph 6:12, NIV; Strauss, 94). Put on **Full Armor!** (Eph 6:10-20)