

A Day In The Life of Jesus, Part 1
Mark 1:21-28
ABC 2/6/22

Books titled *A Day In the Life of...* have become popular. *A Day in the Life of America, Japan, Africa, etc.* Maybe it started with Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn's *One Day in the Life of Ivan Denisovich*. Whatever the case, it's nothing new. Beginning in Mk 1:21 Mark gives us *a day in the life of Jesus*. Before we look at it, remember we have the purpose statement in Mk 1:1 that this is **the beginning of the gospel of Jesus Christ, the Son of God**. The good news is summed up in the person & work of Jesus who is the Christ, the Messiah, God's Son. As Mark writes to believers in Rome he's giving them the historical background for this good news. We've already seen the prediction of this Messiah as Mark quotes some OT prophecies (2-3). We saw His preparation as John the Baptizer came preaching repentance & pointing to Jesus who'd follow him (4-8). We saw the Messiah revealed as Jesus was baptized with God speaking from heaven & the Holy Spirit descending upon Him (9-11). We saw Him in His temptations being victorious over Satan (12-13). We saw the message that Jesus was bringing summarized in vss 14-15 as He came into Galilee. & then we saw 4 men, 2 sets of brothers, follow Him, all **immediately** dropping everything to do so (16-20). & so, heralded by John, commissioned by the Father, filled with the Spirit, victorious over Satan, & accompanied by His disciples, Jesus began His public ministry. Now, as we look at a day in the life of Jesus, we see His authority on display. **21-33**

We're only looking at the 1st event of this day, vss 21-28, which has 2 parts in the same location. In the 1st, Mark shows Jesus teaching with unique authority, unlike & exceeding that of the scribes (21-22). The 2nd part is an account of Jesus casting out a demon (23-26). Both are knit together in vs 27 in that all the people are astonished because the authority by which Jesus expels a demon is the same authority by which He teaches.¹ Jesus' authority reveals a striking contrast between the response of people to Jesus' authority & the response of demons to it. On one hand, people were amazed at Jesus' power & authority. They reacted with wonder, curiosity, & surprise because He taught as no one else. On the other hand, demons were terrified by Him. They responded in

¹ James R. Edwards, *The Gospel according to Mark*, The Pillar New Testament Commentary, p 52

horror, dread, & panic. Those different reactions lie at the heart of understanding the significance of this passage. Both the demons & the people were sinful. Yet, only the demons shrieked in fear. They understood Jesus was their Judge who would cast them into hell. The people did not.² Do you see the irony? The demons recognized who Jesus was, but have no possibility of salvation. The crowds heard the offer of divine forgiveness, but they refused to recognize the One who alone can provide it. In other words, the demons were terrified & couldn't be saved; the people were amazed & wouldn't be saved. Consequently, the people who wouldn't believe & the demons who do **believe & shudder** (Jn 2:19) will all end up in the same eternity. In vs 21-22 we have Jesus'...

1. Marvelous Peaching 21-22

Vs 21 tells us **they went into Capernaum**. Who was **they**? It must be Andrew, Peter, James, & John along with Jesus (16-20). Where did they go? **Capernaum**, which means *village of Nahum*, likely the hometown of the prophet Nahum. According to Mt (4:13; 9:1), **Capernaum** became Jesus' residence after leaving Nazareth but we're not told why. **Capernaum** was a town on the northwest shore of the Sea of Galilee. It was along the main trade route between Egypt in the south & Damascus in the north. In Jesus' day it had a seawall that ran for ½ a mile along the shore that was 8 ft wide. Piers extended from it 100 ft into the lake. It was a border town & the site of a customs office (2:14). It's population could have been as high as 10,000, most of whom were Jews. There was also a small Roman garrison located there. Jews & Gentiles seemed to get along since, according to Lk 7:1-10, a Roman centurion built a synagogue for the Jews in Capernaum. The commercial advantages of a location on a major trade route surrounded by fertile lands & good fishing brought prosperity which continued for several centuries. In the 4th century the city built an impressive synagogue made of imported white limestone rather than from the local black basalt. This isn't the one visited by Jesus, but below it is a basalt stone pavement which has been dated to the 1st century & appears to be the original floor of the synagogue visited by Jesus.³ Before we go further, have you ever wondered where synagogues came from? We don't find them in the OT

² John MacArthur, *Mark 1-8*, MacArthur New Testament Commentary, p 57

³ James R. Edwards, *The Gospel according to Mark*, The Pillar New Testament Commentary, pp 52-53

but they're everywhere in the NT. They developed in the 6th century BC during the Babylonian exile. Prior to that, worship centered in the temple in Jerusalem. When it was destroyed & the Jews were in captivity, they began to meet together in small group gatherings. Even after the Jews returned to their homeland & rebuilt the temple, they continued to structure community life around *synagogues*, which simply means *gathering* or *assembly*. Unlike the temple in Jerusalem where animals were sacrificed by priests, Jewish synagogues were assembly halls or auditoriums where the Torah was read & explained. It became a place of worship, a meeting hall, a school, & courtroom. Sabbath services had only 3 things: prayer, the reading of God's word, & the exposition of it. There was no music, no singing, & no sacrifice. The *Temple* was the place of *worship & sacrifice*; the synagogue was a place of *teaching & instruction*.⁴ Synagogues didn't have what we would call a pastor. Instead they had a policy known as *freedom of the synagogue* which allowed any qualified man to deliver the exposition of the OT passage read that Sabbath. That privilege was often granted to visiting rabbis, as it was with Jesus here. Paul also used this to proclaim the gospel in various cities he travelled through (Acts 9:20; 13:5; 18:4; 19:8). So what did Jesus teach on this occasion? What passage of the OT did He teach from? We're not told. Mark's focus is on the people's response to His teaching not on the teaching itself. The word for **teach** occurs in various forms 35x in Mark & in all but one Jesus is the one doing it. Here, Jesus' **teaching** amazes the congregation because of His **authority**, which was unlike that of **the scribes**. The **teaching** they hear from Jesus is unlike anything they've heard before. Vs 22 says **they were amazed at His teaching**. Literally the word means *to be struck out of one's self* with awe & wonder or panic & shock.⁵ The idea isn't only that they were **amazed** but that they were terrified because they'd never heard anyone **teach** like Jesus. When He opened His mouth, all present were stopped in their tracks, filled with amazement, & pierced by a sense of dread to hear the truth proclaimed with such **authority**. Mark's statement that Jesus taught **as one having authority, & not as the scribes** (22) is less a criticism of the **scribes** than a praise of Jesus. The word Mark uses of Jesus' **authority** is one

⁴ William Barclay, ed., *The Gospel of Mark*, The Daily Study Bible Series, p 30

⁵ G. Abbott-Smith, *A Manual Greek Lexicon of the New Testament*, p 141

he uses often in his gospel.⁶ **Authority** speaks of rule, dominion, jurisdiction, rule, & privilege. Jesus taught with absolute conviction, power, & clarity. Mark's use of this word at the beginning of Jesus' public ministry establishes His **authority** over the highest authorities in both the physical realm, as represented by the scribes, & the supernatural realm, as represented by the demon we'll see shortly.⁷

What was a **scribe** & how did they teach? **Scribes** were the primary teachers then in Jewish society & were usually Pharisees. They traced their heritage back to Ezra who read the law & explained it to the people (Ezra 7:6-11; Neh 8:4-8). Most people had only limited access to the Scriptures & went to the synagogue to hear the Scriptures read & explained by the scribes. Over the centuries, the teaching of the scribes grew less focused on Scripture & more focused on what previous rabbis had said about Scripture. Rather than faithfully explaining the meaning of Scripture, they delighted in complex deliberations, absurd allegories, unintelligible insights, mystical designs, & the teachings of earlier rabbis.⁸ Scribes were highly respected. People deferred to them as they walked through the streets. The best seats in the synagogues were reserved for them & people stood when they entered a room.⁹ The scribes knew all the loopholes to the law, usually for their own good. Their teaching was along the lines of something like this: *Rabbi Hillel says... But on the other hand Gamaliel says.... Then there is Rabbi Eleazar's testimony...* They were constantly borrowing from fallible sources, one scribe quoting another. Jesus was different! When He spoke, He did so as if He needed no authority beyond Himself. He spoke with utter independence. He cited no authorities & quoted no experts. He spoke with the finality of the voice of God. The certainty of Jesus was the opposite of the careful quotations of the Scribes. We see in Matthew's account that Jesus' style was, **You have heard that it was said.... But I say to you...** (Mt 5:21-22, 27-28; 7:28-29). He preached God's Word, not about God's Word. He explained the Law & the Prophets. He was clear & simple. Whereas, the scribes' authority came from **the tradition of the men** (7:8-13), Jesus received His authority directly from the Father in heaven (1:11).

⁶ In Mark occurs 9x, 6 with reference to Jesus (1:22, 27; 2:10; 11:28, 29, 33) & 3 with reference to authority conferred by Jesus on the apostles (3:15; 6:7; 13:34)

⁷ James R. Edwards, *The Gospel according to Mark*, The Pillar New Testament Commentary, p 55

⁸ John MacArthur, *Mark 1-8*, MacArthur New Testament Commentary, pp 61-62

⁹ James R. Edwards, *The Gospel according to Mark*, The Pillar New Testament Commentary, p 54

2. Miraculous Power Even more impressive than Jesus' authority as a teacher is His authority in the supernatural realm. As Jesus teaches He's interrupted abruptly. **23**

Mark's use of the phrase **just then** underscores the immediacy of the demon's reaction. It followed directly or immediately on the heels of Jesus' preaching. Beginning with this story, Jesus' encounters with demons in Mark show the conflict between the kingdom of God & the dominion of Satan, between the One anointed with God's Spirit & those held captive by unclean spirits.¹⁰

Before we get into it it's important to note that in the OT (with the possible exception of Gen 6:1–2), there are no recorded instances of demon possession. In the book of Acts, there are only 2 (Acts 16:16–18; 19:13–16). However, while Jesus was on the earth, literally, *all hell broke loose*. Demonic representatives of Satan seemed to oppress people everywhere Jesus went (Mt 4:24; 8:28; 9:33; 10:8; 12:22–27; Mk 1:23–27; 5:4–13; 9:25; Lk 4:41; 8:2, 28; 9:39; 13:11). Jesus Himself announced the significance of His work by saying, **if I cast out demons by the Spirit of God, then the kingdom of God has come upon you** (Mt 12:28). Confronted by the Son of God Himself, the demons revealed their identities, often in violent & remarkable ways.¹¹ Interestingly, it seems the 1st ones to fully recognize the identity of Jesus hidden in His incarnation were the demons. While many people failed to recognize Him in His fullness, these minions of Satan instantly recognized Him.

Today there's a lot of confusion & bad information being taught about exorcisms & the demonic, partly because the NT doesn't discuss these issues. As you know, exorcism isn't one of the spiritual gifts listed in Scripture & the subject isn't addressed in the epistles. Basically, there are 2 extremes we want to avoid. One is to agree there are demons but then live like they don't exist at all. That's wrong because the Bible clearly tells us they do exist & what we should do about it (Eph 6:10–17). Then there's the other extreme where you obsess over it. You're constantly concerned about running into a demon everywhere you go. That's wrong as well. We want to make sure we're

¹⁰ James R. Edwards, *The Gospel according to Mark*, The Pillar New Testament Commentary, pp 56–57

¹¹ John MacArthur, *Mark 1–8*, MacArthur New Testament Commentary, p 63

careful of these 2 things: where we completely ignore the spiritual forces & where we obsess over it. Both are wrong. Much more could be said, but we'll let that suffice for now.

The content & authority of Jesus' teaching was too much for the demon. As one commentator put it, *just as foul things scurry from the light when you lift a stone, evil spirits who love darkness recoil from the light.*¹² The demon in this man wanted nothing to do with Jesus. He interrupts Jesus' teaching & says, **24**.

Why did he use the plural? Was it because the man was filled with many demons? Was one demon speaking on behalf of himself & the man he possessed? I think he was probably representing the whole demonic kingdom of Satan (Eph 2:2). His opening burst, **What business do we have with each other...?** was a common OT phrase which was roughly equivalent to, *You have nothing to do with us*. The evil spirit wanted Jesus to go away. He had nothing in common with Christ. The only relationship the demon had with Jesus was one of conflict & now it was faced with defeat & judgment. The demons knew that when the Son of God appeared on earth, their doom would be certain because Jesus came to bind the **strong man**, Satan, & all his hellish powers (3:27). The demons knew why the Son of God had come. They knew He brought salvation with Him. They did everything they could to oppose Him. But from the very start of Jesus' ministry, it was apparent they were no match for His sovereign authority. It was divine power that threw them out of heaven & would one day throw them into hell. In between those 2 events, during Jesus' earthly ministry, the Lord's invincibility over the satanic realm was vividly put on display in every encounter with them. The next phrase, **Have you come to destroy us?** was probably a defiant statement: *You have come to destroy us!* The demon realized the power of Jesus & cried out with an expression of dread. The demon is stating the very One who'd come to seek & to save the lost (Lk 19:10) had also come to destroy the demons. The demon refers to **Jesus of Nazareth** as **the Holy One of God**. His human name & His eternal identity. The demon was terrified. He realized he was in the presence of the holy God & nothing strikes more terror into the heart of creatures than to be in the presence of the holy. We'll see this throughout Mark's gospel. When the holiness of Christ is shown, the

¹² William L. Lane, *The Gospel According To Mark*, p 73

immediate response was fear & dread. That's why the demon screamed when **the Holy One of God** came into his presence. Jesus was **holy** not only in the sense of being sinless but because He'd been anointed, set apart, separated for the performance of the most exalted task (Is 61:1–3; Lk 4:18, 19; 19:10; Jn 3:16; 10:36; 2 Cor 5:21).¹³ The demons recognized exactly who Jesus was. They knew He had full authority & power to cast them into eternal punishment. That's why they repeatedly responded with such panic & dismay. Whenever people deny Jesus' deity they show less insight & knowledge than the demons. The demons recognize the mission & authority of Jesus before humanity does (1:24; 3:11; 5:7). They become the 2nd party in Mark's presentation of Jesus, following the voice of God at His baptism (1:11), to announce Jesus' divine Sonship.

Mark now gives us what Jesus said. **25**

To have allowed the demon to go unrebuked would've been to compromise the reason for which Jesus came into the world, to confront Satan & strip him of his power (1 Jn 3:8). This episode is indicative of Jesus' sustained conflict with the demons throughout His time on earth. Jesus' rebuke came in the form of 2 short commands: **Be quiet, & come out of him!** (25). The demon was rebuked because he had no authority to proclaim who Jesus was & no right to have possession of the man made in the image of God. The demon had no choice but to obey immediately. The 1st command silenced the demon. The 2nd drove him out. Though his identification of Jesus was accurate, Jesus didn't need nor want any publicity from the agents of Satan. He didn't want people coming to Him because of the testimony of demons. As it was, the religious leaders accused Him of casting **out demons only by Beelzebul the ruler of the demons** (Mt 12:24). Permitting the demons to continue speaking about Him would have added support to the speculations of the Pharisees. So whenever they affirmed His identity, He shut them up & *muzzled* them. Jesus' 2nd command, **come out of him**, resulted in the demon's violent departure from the man. He obeys at once, though he does so unwillingly. **26**

With one dramatic final protest, causing the man's body to convulse, the demon let out a final scream as he departed. **Cried out** means to scream or shout with strong emotion & describes the

¹³ William Hendriksen & Simon J. Kistemaker, *Exposition of the Gospel According to Mark*, vol. 10, New Testament Commentary, p 66

shrieks of someone experiencing intense agony. Only the divine King has the power necessary to break the bondage of Satan. He can destroy the devil, dismantle his forces, & deliver captive souls. Jesus' power & authority was unmistakable to those in the synagogue that day.

3. Magnificent Product The exorcism ends with the amazement of all present. **27-28**

When they asked, **what is this?** they were referring both to Jesus' teaching & His casting out of the demon. The same authority & power exhibited in Jesus' teaching was also shown in His interaction with the demon. Note that although the account itself speaks only of one demon, the people immediately draw the correct conclusion that what Jesus had done to one unclean spirit could be done to all. The influence of Jesus' authority goes deep, but it also **spread everywhere into all the surrounding district of Galilee.** & this was just the beginning, **1:39**.

Jesus launched His public ministry by putting on displays of power over evil spirits unprecedented in Israel & the world (Mt 9:33). He taught like no one else & He possessed & used authority no one had ever seen. The demons recognized Him & were terrified; the crowds witnessed Him & were amazed. The demons believed Him but couldn't be saved; the crowds refused to believe in Him &, therefore, wouldn't be saved. A combination of both responses is necessary for salvation. Sinners need to be both terrified & amazed: terrified by such a Judge & astonished by such a Savior. It isn't enough to be simply amazed by Jesus. He isn't satisfied with curiosity, wonder, or astonishment. He wants sinners to fear Him as the Judge & then run to Him as their Savior. The people who heard Jesus teach & witnessed His authority on that Sabbath in Capernaum were left with no excuses. Yet they ultimately rejected Him as their Lord & Savior (Mt 11:23; Lk 10:15). Maybe they thought of Jesus as a good teacher, a moral man, or a misunderstood social activist. None of that was enough. They may have been amazed by Him at the moment, but unless they came to embrace Him in saving faith, worshiping Him as the Son of God, trusting in Him as the Savior of the world, & submitting to Him as the Lord over all, their amazement was worthless. It was no better than the trembling terror of the demons. So it is for all who reject the person & work of Jesus.

Just before Jesus left this earth, in the Great Commission, He said, **All authority has been given to Me in heaven & on earth** (Mt 28:18). Jesus is the One who has all authority over your life & mine, &

over this entire world. If you haven't yet surrendered & given yourself to this one true authority, Jesus, I encourage you to do so. Everyone else will let you down. No politician can satisfy. No celebrity will fulfill. It's not possible. But with Jesus it is. He has no limitations. Make Him your Leader. He won't let you down. What He's promised, He will fulfill. I encourage you, make Him your King. & for those of you that are believing & following Him, ask yourself if you've fully surrendered to Him in all areas. Are there still corners of your heart & mind you're still hanging on to? If so, surrender them to Jesus who has all authority. He has all power. He has all strength to help you fight, defeat sin, & to pursue righteousness in faith. PRAY

Communion

The title the demon calls Jesus, **the Holy One of God**, means that Jesus is infinitely & absolutely holy, fully & perfectly divine. He came down from above to save sinners, yet He's set apart from sinners in that He's completely sinless, perfect in all of His ways, equally holy with God the Father. It's a title of deity. He takes the divine title for Himself to show He's equal to God.

The title **the Holy One of God** is found in only one other place in the NT. When some of Jesus' disciples decided to stop following Him, Jesus asked the twelve disciples, **You do not want to go away also, do you?** Peter replied: **Lord, to whom shall we go? You have words of eternal life. We have believed and have come to know that You are the Holy One of God** (Jn 6:66-69). With these words, Peter accurately identified their Master as God incarnate. It acknowledged that the holy God, who's enthroned in the heavens, has come down to be among unholy men. It speaks of the fact that the transcendent, majestic, regal God of heaven has taken on human flesh, yet without sin. Jesus Himself said, **I have come down from heaven** (Jn 6:38). Jesus was holy God in human form. Jesus is infinitely pure. Scripture affirms this repeatedly: **in Him there is no sin** (1 Jn 3:5); **He committed no sin, nor was any deceit found in His mouth** (1 Pt 2:22); **Him who knew no sin** (2 Cor 5:21). Jesus could say to His enemies, **Which one of you convicts Me of sin?** (Jn 8:46) because He had no sin.

At Calvary, all of our sins were laid on the sinless Lamb of God & He gave to us His pure, sinless, perfect obedience to the law of God. This is the great exchange of Calvary: **He made Him who knew**

no sin *to be* sin on our behalf, so that we might become the righteousness of God in Him (2 Cor 5:21). Jesus had to come as He did in order to be what He was, sinless & perfect, in order to do what He, the Holy One, did, die on the cross as the sinless Lamb of God, in order to become sin for us. Through death, Jesus destroyed the one who has the power of death, the Devil (Heb 2:14). He bound the strong man, plundered his house at the cross, & set us the captives free (Mt 12:29; Eph 4:8). His victory shows that **greater is He who is in you than he who is in the world** (1 Jn 4:4). Therefore, we ought to cry out, **thanks be to God, who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ** (1 Cor 15:57).

We give thanks again to God as we remember what He did through our Lord Jesus Christ as we take of communion together. Jesus tells His followers to do this regularly to remember Him and what He's done for us. If you're not a follower of Jesus, just sit & listen as the elements have no meaning to you. If you are a follower of Jesus, I encourage you to take a moment & confess your sins as Paul tells us to do (1 Cor 11:28) before we eat of the bread & drink of the cup.

SILENT PRAYERS OF CONFESSION

In Mark's account of the last Passover, the 1st communion, we read:

While they were eating, He took *some* bread, and after a blessing He broke *it*, and gave *it* to them, and said, "Take *it*; this is My body" (Mk 14:22). We eat of the bread remembering the Holy One of God who gave His life for our salvation.

& when He had taken a cup *and* given thanks, He gave *it* to them, and they all drank from it. And He said to them, "This is My blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many. Truly I say to you, I will never again drink of the fruit of the vine until that day when I drink it new in the kingdom of God" (Mk 14:23-25). We drink of the cup remembering Jesus, who has all authority & yet willingly came to earth to die in our place, take our punishment upon Himself, & give us His righteousness. With thanksgiving, drink together.