

## **Mark 1:21-28**

### **Authority of the King**

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## **Introduction**

One of the most important questions in life is “Who is Jesus?” This is the question Mark is answering. Jesus is the King of the Universe. If Jesus is King, then people should submit to His authority! Jesus demonstrated His Kingship in how He began His ministry. He showed His authority over Satan and in the calling of His disciples. Today we will see His authority with regard to the Scriptures and over Satan’s demonic forces.

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## Mark 1:21-28

Then they went into Capernaum, and immediately on the Sabbath He entered the synagogue and taught. <sup>22</sup> And they were astonished at His teaching, for He taught them as one having authority, and not as the scribes.

<sup>23</sup> Now there was a man in their synagogue with an unclean spirit. And he cried out, <sup>24</sup> saying, "Let *us* alone! What have we to do with You, Jesus of Nazareth? Did You come to destroy us? I know who You are—the Holy One of God!"

<sup>25</sup> But Jesus rebuked him, saying, "Be quiet, and come out of him!" <sup>26</sup> And when the unclean spirit had convulsed him and cried out with a loud voice, he came out of him. <sup>27</sup> Then they were all amazed, so that they questioned among themselves, saying, "What is this? What new doctrine *is* this? For with authority He commands even the unclean spirits, and they obey Him." <sup>28</sup> And immediately His fame spread throughout all the region around Galilee.

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## Authority of His Word

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The "**they**" refers to Jesus and His disciples. Jesus entered Capernaum and, on the Sabbath, entered the synagogue and taught. Synagogues were established during the Babylonian captivity after the temple had been destroyed. Any city with 10 Jewish men could establish a synagogue. These became centers of the Jewish community and served multiple functions. It was here that copies of the Scripture were kept and read on the Sabbath. Any qualified male could read and explain the Scriptures. Visiting Rabbis were given this privilege and here it is given to Jesus.

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Mark does not focus on what Jesus taught but rather on the reaction of the hearers that **“they were astonished at His teaching, for He taught them as one having authority, and not as the scribes.”**

The word **“authority”** speaks of rule, dominion, jurisdiction, full right, power, privilege, and prerogative. Jesus taught with absolute conviction, objectivity and confidence of the divine King, and the people could only respond in wonder. This was in contrast to the teachings of the scribes, who quoted the views of other rabbis. Jesus did not derive His theology from the musings of other people, nor did He offer a variety of possible explanations. **He is the author of Scripture**, He knew what it meant and His arguments were reasonable, inescapable, and focused on essential matters.

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The word “astonished” is a strong word and means, “to be struck out of one’s self” with awe and wonder. Jesus’ message was so riveting and powerful that His audience sat in stunned silence, hanging on to every word He uttered.

There is a difference between being **“astonished”** and **responding in obedience** to what is being said. The scribes taught to bring attention to themselves. Jesus wanted to draw attention to who He was but also wanted to declare the truth of His Word.

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## Authority of His Judgment

Mark 1:23-24

Now there was a man in their synagogue with an unclean spirit. And he cried out, <sup>24</sup>saying, "Let us alone! What have we to do with You, Jesus of Nazareth? Did You come to destroy us? I know who You are—the Holy One of God!"

Mark tells us that there was "**a man in their synagogue with an unclean spirit**". Demons do not always portray themselves as evil entities. They often appear as "angels of light" (2 Corinthians 11:14) in order to deceive and misdirect people from God's Truth (1 Timothy 4:1). The Scribes often taught contrary to Biblical truth (we see this today in false teachers). Jesus will accuse the Pharisees as being "children of the devil" (John 8:44-45).

One must ask why this demon possessed man was allowed into the synagogue. He must have appeared normal, maybe even a teacher. Demonic forces are at the heart of false religion desiring people's eternal destruction.

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The Greek speaks to the immediacy of the demon's reaction. It followed directly on the heels of Jesus' preaching. His shrieking outburst provided audible evidence that fallen angels tremble at the power of Christ's word. The content of his exclamation indicated that the demon was also terrified by the authority of Christ's judgment.

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We do not have time to get into a detailed study of the Doctrine of Demons. But here is what we need to know today.

Angels were created by Jesus. They were holy and were to serve God (John 1:1-2).

One third of the angels joined Satan’s rebellion to rule instead of Jesus (Rev 12:3-4; Isaiah 14:13-14).

In Judgment, God (Jesus) expelled these “fallen angels” out of heaven.

Fallen angels are awaiting Jesus’ judgment where they will be cast into the Lake of Fire forever – there is no redemption for these angels.

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Mark is drawing attention to the difference in the response of those in the synagogue. People were amazed at Jesus’ teaching but does not say they repented or changed their way. We might say that they were entertained by His presence.

The unclean spirit, recognized who Jesus was and knew that it would be Jesus who will cast them into the Lake of Fire. The response seems to be one of terror, **“Let us alone! What have we to do with You, Jesus of Nazareth? Did You come to destroy us?”**

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He called Jesus the "**Holy One of God**" because he was fully aware of Jesus' divine authority. This unclean spirit, a being characterized by ultimate depravity and incurable wickedness, cringed in the presence of perfect virtue and holiness. They knew that Jesus came into the world to destroy their works (1 John 3:8). When Jesus confronted the forces of evil, the question was often raised if He was there to torment before the appointed time?

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## Authority of His Power

Mark 1:25-28

But Jesus rebuked him, saying, "Be quiet, and come out of him!" <sup>26</sup>And when the unclean spirit had convulsed him and cried out with a loud voice, he came out of him. <sup>27</sup>Then they were all amazed, so that they questioned among themselves, saying, "What is this? What new doctrine is this? For with authority He commands even the unclean spirits, and they obey Him." <sup>28</sup>And immediately His fame spread throughout all the region around Galilee.

The day of eternal judgment for Satan and his angels has not yet come (Rev. 20:10), this demon was given a foretaste of Christ's absolute authority over him. He was cast out by the same power that will one day cast him into the lake of fire.

Undeterred by the demon's cries, Jesus rebuked him. As the divine King, He possessed the authority to command this evil spirit. No dialogue, negotiation, ritual, or struggle was necessary.

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Jesus' rebuke came in the form of two short commands: "Be quiet, and come out of him!" The demon had no choice but to obey immediately. The first command silenced the demon; the second drove him out. Throughout Jesus' ministry, He repeatedly forbade the unclean spirits to testify about Him (cf. Mark 1:34). Though their identification of Jesus was accurate, He did not need any publicity from the agents of Satan. As it was, the religious leaders accused Him of casting "out demons only by Beelzebul the ruler of the demons" (Matt. 12:24). Permitting the demons to continue speaking about Him would only have added support to the accusations of the Pharisees.

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Jesus' second command, come out of him, resulted in the demon's violent departure. The unclean spirit preferred to remain to hold that man's soul captive, but he was forced to go, unwillingly and not quietly. As Mark records, "**the unclean spirit had convulsed him and cried out with a loud voice, he came out of him.**" With one dramatic final protest, causing the man's body to convulse, the demon let out a final cry as he departed.

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Jesus' power was unmistakable, so that those who sat in the synagogue, who had already been amazed by His teaching, were all amazed at His ability to deliver this demon-possessed man. They debated among themselves, saying, "**What is this? What new doctrine is this? For with authority He commands even the unclean spirits, and they obey Him.**" The crowd had been stunned by the authority of His teaching and then equally shocked by the power He exercised over the unclean spirit.

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The word about what Jesus taught and did became the topic of discussion. As Mark explains, "**immediately His fame spread throughout all the region around Galilee.**"

This was the beginning of Jesus' public ministry. He will move from town to town, visiting Synagogues, casting out evil spirits, and healing various diseases and deformities. Jesus was demonstrating who He was – the Divine Creator King!

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## So What ...

### **Who is Jesus to you?**

For so many, He is merely a historical figure, a good teacher, and force for morality. To others, He is the object of hatred and distain.

Whether people acknowledge it or not, Jesus is the Sovereign King of all Creation – both spiritual and physical. He loves mankind and gave Himself to redeem us back to Himself.

The question you must ask: **“Is He your King?”**