

The Gospel of *Mark*

The Servant Leadership of Jesus

The Servant's Ministry in and around Galilee (cont) (1:14 – 9:50)

A Period of Popularity: *Jesus Ministering in Capernaum* (1:21-37)

1:21 When Jesus & His disciples arrived at Capernaum, He began teaching in the synagogue ^{Luke 4:31}, which was common for Jesus ^{Mark 1:39, 6:2, Luke 4:16, John 6:59} and the norm for Paul ^{Acts 9:20, 14:1, 17:2, 19:8}.

Mark infrequently wrote about Jesus' teachings, because his emphasis was on the actions of Jesus

Capernaum was a prosperous fishing village on the northwest shore of the Sea of Galilee.

The city of Capernaum had a Roman garrison and was located on a major north-south road.

Following His rejection at Nazareth ^{Luke 4:16-30}, Jesus made Capernaum His headquarters and home ^{Matthew 4:12-16}. It may have also been the home of His mother and brothers ^{John 2:12}.

Synagogues, the places for Jewish worship and teaching, were set up in any community with at least 10 Jewish men older than 12. They originated during the Babylonian captivity, after the destruction of the Temple and Jerusalem by Nebuchadnezzar in 586 B.C. ^{2 Kings 25:1-17}.

22 The teaching of Jesus emphasized his own authority by His saying "I tell you..." ^{Matthew 5:18, Mark 9:1}, instead of speaking like Jewish teachers, who said "The prophets have written..." ^{Matthew 5:21,27,33,38}. As Jesus spoke, the people could sense the power in His confident authority ^{Matthew 7:28-29, Luke 4:31-32}.

23-24 As Jesus taught, a possessed man loudly demanded Jesus explain His intentions ^{Matthew 8:29}.

Three terms are used interchangeably in different translations: evil spirit, unclean spirit and demon.

Two facts about the evil spirit possessing the man (1) the demon's use of the plural noun "us" may not have indicated multiple spirits in the man (every reference is to a single evil spirit), so the spirit may have been speaking for all the demons on earth and (2) the demon had **Knowledge and Acceptance** of who Jesus was ^{James 2:19}, but he lacked **Trust** in the redemptive work Jesus would perform. Embracing two out of three does not result in a partial salvation.

25-26 Jesus commanded the demon to "Be quiet" ^{Mark 4:39} (literally: "Be muzzled" ^{v.34}) and "Come out" of the man. As a final jolt to the possessed man's body, the demon furiously shook him ^{Mark 9:20}, but then shrieked as he obeyed Jesus' mandate to leave the man.

Mark C Chapter 1b

There were at least two reasons why Jesus told the unclean (morally impure) spirit to be quiet: (1) Jesus did not want excessive attention paid to Him, because He was not near the end of His ministry (His “time” was not near ^{John 7:6}) and (2) Jesus did not want to provide support to the “teachers of the law” who would later accuse Him of being in league with Satan ^{Mark 3:22}.

27-28 The people’s amazement at ^{Mark 10:24,32} and appreciation for the genuine authority of Jesus’ teachings ^{v.22} were enhanced by their observance of His absolute power over the demonic forces. As a result, the news “spread quickly over the whole region of Galilee” ^{Matthew 4:24, Luke 4:14,37, 5:15, 7:17}.

29 When His teachings and healings in the synagogue were completed, Jesus and His disciples went to the house of Simon and Andrew, who had moved from Bethsaida ^{John 1:44} a few miles to the east of Capernaum. Mark is the only gospel writer who mentioned James and John’s accompanying Jesus.

30-31 As soon as Jesus discovered that the mother-in-law of Simon (Peter) was very ill ^{Luke 4:38}, He helped her up with His hand (the first of 6 times in Mark that Jesus used the touch of His hands to heal someone) and her fever was gone. She then waited on (*diakoneō*: to serve someone) them.

Paul affirmed Mark’s indication that Simon Peter (Cephas) was married ^{1 Corinthians 9:5}.

Laying on hands was a critical aspect of the healing ministry of Jesus ^{Mark 1:41, 5:41, 8:23, 9:27,36}, and represents a deep personal compassion and caring for the life of another person.

32-34 After a full day of teaching and healing, the “whole town” still came to the door of the home to bring many of their afflicted – both physical and spiritual, and Jesus healed many types of illnesses and drove evil spirits out of a large number of people ^{Matthew 4:23}. Early in His ministry, Jesus demanded the silence ^{Mark 3:12} of the demons in order to delay Jewish criticism ^{Mark 3:22}.

Note that the Bible makes a clear distinction between people being diseased and possessed.

Every healing Jesus performed had/has both a physical and a spiritual meaning. He healed people who were: blind, deaf, crippled, lepers ^{v.40}, diseased, demon possessed, dead, etc.

35 Despite the long previous day, Jesus continued His practice of praying to His Father before dawn in an isolated place ^{Luke 4:42, 5:16, 16:12}. He modeled for humans discipline in prayer for spiritual renewal.

36-37 Simon and his “companions” (including Andrew, James & John ^{v.29}) went looking for Jesus, and when they found Him, in another hyperbole, they proclaimed “Everyone is looking for you!”.

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A Period of Popularity: *Jesus Ministering in Galilee* (1:38-45)

38-39 Jesus understood the critical importance of the healings and exorcisms ^{Isaiah 61:1b}; however, he recognized the people of Capernaum were mainly caught up in the sensationalism of the miracles. In addition, Jesus knew His main objective was “to proclaim good news to the poor” ^{Isaiah 61:1a}, so He discerned (perhaps from His prayers) that it was time for Him and His disciples to leave Capernaum. They then traveled throughout the region of Galilee, “preaching...and driving out demons”.

40 Exhibiting a great faith in Jesus, a man suffering with a terrible skin disease (probably leprosy) came humbly to Jesus ^{Mark 10:17} confidently stating that Jesus could cure him, if Jesus was “willing”.

Leprosy is a model of sin: (1) it is deeper than the skin ^{Leviticus 13:3}, **(2) it spreads** ^{Leviticus 13:5-8}, **(3) it defiles & isolates** ^{Leviticus 13:42-46}, **(4) it produces things only fit for the fire** ^{Leviticus 13:47-52}.

41-42 Mark is the only Gospel to record ^{Matthew 8:2-4, Luke 5:12-14} the emotional reaction of Jesus to the man’s plea. Replying positively, Jesus exhibited His healing power through His touch & spoken word.

Jesus touched the leprous man, in order to cure him, even though the man was considered unclean ^{Leviticus 13:11} **and the requirement of the law to stay away from lepers** ^{Leviticus 13:45-46}.

However, God makes it clear he wants all men saved (spiritually clean) ^{2 Peter 3:9, 1 Timothy 2:4}.

Just as leprosy is a model of sin, Jesus’ healing of this man was a model of salvation: the man cried out in faith that Jesus could cleanse (heal) him and immediately Jesus made him clean.

43-44 In another attempt to maintain some level of anonymity while He spread His message of hope until it was time for Him to complete His mission of redemption, Jesus instructed the man to maintain silence, except for showing the priest on duty at the temple in order to observe the OT regulations concerning cleansed lepers ^{Leviticus 14:1-32}, which was the official public affirmation of his healing.

45 While the man simply wanted to express his incredible joy and appreciation for what Jesus did for him, his disobedience in ignoring the request of Jesus to not tell anyone except the priest resulted in just what Jesus was trying to avoid: sensationalism that kept Him from being able to share His message in the synagogues and streets of the Galilean towns He wished to visit. In spite of the fact Jesus stayed mostly in the deserted places (to let the excitement die down and to pray ^{Luke 5:16}), large crowds came to hear Jesus teach, to be healed and/or to watch Him perform His miracles.