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Markan Theology Paper

INTRODUCTION

The book of Mark is action-packed with the ministry of Jesus. The main theme of Mark is the advancement of the kingdom of God through Jesus' life. In just the first chapter, Jesus gets baptized, gets tempted in the wilderness, preaches the gospel, calls His first disciple, and right off the bat, kicks out an impure spirit and heals many people. Mark 1:14-45 is written as one day which tells about what a normal day is like for Jesus and His disciples. There are four components of Jesus' advancement of the kingdom of God that can be seen in the first chapter which carries throughout the book of Mark: (1) Preaching the Gospel, (2) Kicking out demons, (3) Healing the Sick, (4) Praying in Solitary place (Rest). Up until Jesus' death and resurrection, Jesus is doing one of these things throughout the book of Mark.

Jesus' ministry of power is demonstrated through His deliverance and healing ministry. There are twelve mentions of deliverance ministry and eleven on healing out of the sixteen chapters of the book which takes up a big portion of the book. He also performs multiple miracles such as feeding the multitudes, walking on water, raising the dead and His own resurrection. A common response to the miracles and His preaching is the amazement at the level of authority Jesus carries. Jesus never prays something to happen but rather commands people to be healed and demons to leave. This level of authority was rooted in Jesus' identity as the Son of God. It was the intimacy with the Father that allowed Him to know the authority He had over the kingdom of darkness. This paper will highlight Jesus' authority and intimacy with the Father and how He confronts the kingdom of darkness.

AUTHORITY IN IDENTITY

In all of Jesus' ministry account in the book the Mark, there is not once where Jesus prays for a miracle. Instead, He commands. When Jesus went to the synagogue in Mark 1:21, a man possessed by a demon cried out, "What do you want with us, Jesus of Nazareth? Have you come to destroy us? I know who you are – the Holy One of God!" Then Jesus tells the demon to shut up and commands him, "Come out of him!" Then those who were watching were amazed at Jesus' teaching and authority that even demons obey Him.

This authority came from Jesus' identity and intimacy with the Father. The opening of Mark highlights the Father affirming Jesus' identity when He was baptized. "And a voice came from heave: "You are my Son, whom I love; with you I am well pleased." (Mark 1:11). Before Jesus did anything, He had to be secure in His identity in God and it came as direct words from the Father. This moment set the stage for the rest of His ministry. He understood that He had authority in all things and at the end, even death, death on a cross. He exercised this authority by commanding. He calmed the storm by commanding it to be still (4:35-41). He commands demons to come out (1:25, 9:25), commands the dead to rise (4:41), commands healing (1:41, 2:8, 3:5, 7:34, 10:52).

He was never nervous or unsure of anything He did because He knew who He was, God's beloved Son. In the midst of the storms, encounters with demons, even when faced with accusations and challenges, Jesus was never afraid, intimidated or insecure. He taught, healed, delivered, and performed miracles with complete security in God. In the same way, He sent out His disciples to do the things that He had been doing in His name. He taught them that He had authority over all things, so they did not need to be afraid. When Jesus sent the disciples out two by two, He "gave them authority over the unclean spirits" and charged to go out and advance the

kingdom of God (8:7). The disciples were able to cast out many demons and anointed with oil those who were sick and healed them (8:13).

THEOLOGY OF DELIVERANCE IN MARK

Jesus' ministry debut act was a deliverance. In Mark 1:21-28, Jesus is met by a demonized man in a synagogue who cries out to Jesus, "What have you to do with us, Jesus of Nazareth? Have you come to destroy us? I know who you are – the Holy One of God." But Jesus rebuked him, saying, "Be silent, and come out of him!" The response of the people was amazement that they asked themselves, "What is this? A new teaching with authority! He commands even the unclean spirits, and they obey him" (1:28).

The fact that people were amazed that Jesus commands evil spirits implies that they had never seen anything like this before. Additionally, there were many people who were visibly demonized as everywhere Jesus went, people brought the sick and the demonized to get healed and delivered (1:34). The man who had Legion in Mark 5 lived in caves because people tried to contain him with chains, but he broke free. No one was able to subdue him. In Mark 9, the demon would throw the boy into fire or water and try to kill him. The people in the book of Mark lived in a time where demonization was common and terrible, but no one knew what to do until of course, Jesus came along and started to kick them out.

The people finally had a solution to their problems of demonization. Wherever Jesus went, he healed and delivered people. Jesus did not have any tricks to deliverance. He simply exercised His authority over demons and commanded them to leave and they had no choice but to obey. Jesus was never afraid or intimidated by the demonic manifestations because He knew who He was, the Son of God. What was amazing is that Jesus did not do deliverance by Himself.

He gave this same authority over demons to His disciples so that they too, can advance the kingdom of God by destroying the kingdom of darkness.

In Mark 6, Jesus sends out his disciples two by two and “gave them authority over the unclean spirits” (6:7) and they casted out many demons (6:13). This authority was not limited to the disciples as the John found someone driving out demons in Jesus’ name and tried to get him to stop. The authority He gave them was the authority of His name. It is because Jesus has authority over the kingdom of darkness, demons tremble and obey Him. It is by the name of Jesus Christians have authority over demons.

REST

A reoccurring action of Jesus is His going away to a solitary place to pray after long period of ministering. In Mark 1, Jesus preached the Gospel, called His first disciples, casted out a demon, healed many people and drove out more demons all in one day. The very next morning, Jesus got up, left the house and went off to a solitary place to pray by Himself. When His disciples came back from ministering, Jesus told them to come with Him to a quiet place to get rest (6:31). They went to a remote place, but the crowds recognized Jesus and followed Him to a remote place. There, Jesus had compassion on them, so He ministered and fed more than five thousand people (6:34-44). Immediate after this miracle, Jesus made His disciples get on the boat to go ahead of Him and He went up to mountainside to pray.

This time of isolation was very important to Jesus. The point was to keep in deep connection with the Father. This was the time where there were no distractions or people needing healing or deliverance. It was a time where Jesus could be alone with the Father whom He loved. This was His time of restoration and intimacy with the Father. Because Jesus operated through the power of the Holy Spirit in His humanity, He knew that if He were to keep on ministering at

the level He was going, His intimacy with the Father was going to be a top priority. His disciples who came back from ministering were to go to a solitary place to rest and pray to the Father so that they could stay connected and continue to operate in His power and authority.

CONCLUSION

Jesus was no stranger to healing and deliverance ministry. However, He was very different than anyone who attempted to heal and deliver people by His authority over the demons. He never prayed a demon away but rather, He cast them out by commanding them to leave. He had the authority to silence them and cast them out. Additionally, Legion – who seemed to be a powerful demon as no chains could bind it – begged Jesus for permission to not be destroyed and enter the pigs, which He granted (5:9). He also commanded the demons who were in the boy to never come back in (9:25).

Jesus carried this authority because He knew who He was. When Jesus got baptized in Mark 1, the Holy Spirit came upon Him and God spoke Jesus' identity to Him, "You are my beloved Son; with you I am well pleased." Jesus gave this same identity and authority over the kingdom of darkness to His disciples. In the name of Jesus, His disciples and other people were able to cast out demons.

Because deliverance was a part of Jesus' ministry, it is for Christians today. There are many people, just like in Jesus' time, who are demonized and need to be freed. Only by the name of Jesus, can Christians kick out demons and set people free. Jesus was never nervous or afraid so His followers do not need to be nervous or afraid. Christians are seated with Jesus in the heavenly places and He called them to further the kingdom of God by destroying the kingdom of darkness by the power and authority of Jesus' name.