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**THE RELATION OF THE HEALING OF DEMONIACS
TO ST. MARK'S KERYGMA**

**A Thesis Presented to the Faculty
of Concordia Seminary, St. Louis,
Department of Exegetical Theology
in partial fulfillment of the
requirements for the degree of
Bachelor of Divinity**

by

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June 1957

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CHAPTER I

GENERAL INTRODUCTION TO ST. MARK'S KERYGMA

The purpose of the research for this paper is to investigate the kerygma in the Gospel according to St. Mark, to study the phenomenon of demon-possession and the healing of demoniacs in this Gospel, and especially to establish the proper relationship between the first two purposes.

Several factors account for the study in this paper. Among them are the following: (1) St. Mark's Gospel has only recently achieved its deserved prominence among the synoptics; (2) Various attempts have been made during the past sixty years to explain the Messianic secret; (3) The study of miracles, especially the healing of demoniacs, provides a fascinating study for research; (4) There is great value in unifying the message of the New Testament Gospel around the kingdom of God concept.

The terms in the title are mostly self-explanatory. Kerygma was chosen as a transliteration of the Greek κήρυγμα and is used to indicate the message and proclamation of St. Mark's Gospel in distinction from the specific teaching activities of Jesus (διδάχη). The purposes of the Gospel will also be included under this word. Kerygma was chosen as a more neutral and

comprehensive word than Gospel.

The discussion of the kerygma in this paper will be limited to (1) the kerygma of the early church as reflected in St. Mark's Gospel, (2) the Messianic secret, and (3) the kingdom of God. To gain the best understanding of St. Mark's kerygma in the first three chapters, background materials from the Old Testament and from other literature as well as from contemporary Jewish expectations will be included. The fourth chapter discusses the nature of demoniac possession and the healing of demoniacs. That chapter includes most of the basic textual study of the pertinent miracles. The fifth and final chapter is an attempt to relate the fourth chapter to the first three chapters by showing the relationship between the healing of demoniacs and St. Mark's kerygma of the Messianic secret and the kingdom of God.

The major source materials consulted for this study include the Greek text of the Gospel according to St. Mark, the Bible in the Authorized and Revised Standard Versions, concordances, Bible dictionaries, Greek-English lexicons, exegetical commentaries--particularly those by Henry Swete and Vincent Taylor--word studies in Kittel's Theologisches Woerterbuch zum Neuen Testament, and works by such prominent New Testament scholars as John Bright, C. H. Dodd, Hans Ebeling, Archibald M. Hunter, Rudolph Otto, Alan Richardson, Archibald Robertson, E. F. Scott, and Ethelbert

Stauffer.

When St. Mark wrote his Gospel, he had no intention of producing a biography of Christ. It was not to be an historical study of Jesus nor a description of the exact chronological sequence of events in the life of Jesus. Rather it was Mark's purpose to present the gospel of Jesus Christ. Jesus is the substance and content of this gospel, this "good news," this εὐαγγέλιον.¹ For St. Mark the gospel meant the news of the most significant redemptive acts in the life of Christ. He includes the temptation, eighteen specific miracles, and several parables about the kingdom of God. A large percentage of his Gospel is devoted to the passion and resurrection of Jesus.

The purpose of Mark's Gospel can be seen especially in two passages, the heading to the Gospel (1:1) and the words with which Jesus introduced His Galilean ministry (1:15). Several translations are possible for the heading: (1) "Here begins the gospel of Jesus Christ"; (2) "Here begins the good news that Jesus is the Christ"; (3) "Here begins the good news that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God." The third translation is the preferable one if we accept the witness for "the Son of God" given by the Codex Vaticanus (B) and the Codex Bezae (D). If "Son of God" is

¹Harold A. Guy, The Origin of the Gospel of Mark (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1954), pp. 163, 165.

part of the true heading, it supports the view that Mark is pointing not only to the Messiahship of Jesus but also to His deity, to a theological Christ rather than to an historical Jesus.² Ebeling follows this view when he says that Mark's fundamental purpose is to bear witness to the revelation of the Son of God in order to call men to Christ.³

In Mark 1:15 Jesus begins His Galilean ministry with the words, "The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand." This statement shows that the Gospel points not only to Jesus as the Messiah and the Son of God but to Jesus as the instrument who has brought the kingdom of God, this new power, into the context of men's lives. A more elaborate treatment of the kingdom of God is presented in the third chapter.

It has already been stated that Mark includes eighteen specific miracles of Jesus. Some 209 verses out of the 666 in the Gospel deal directly or indirectly with miracles; if the passion narrative is omitted, the first ten chapters have 200 verses out of 425 that deal with miracles.⁴ It

²Henry Barclay Swete, The Gospel According to St. Mark (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1909), p. xc.

³Hans Juergen Ebeling, Das Messiasgeheimnis und die Botschaft des Marcus-Evangelisten (Berlin: Alfred Toepelmann, 1939), p. 114.

⁴Alan Richardson, The Miracle-Stories of the Gospels (London: S C M Press Ltd., 1941), p. 36.

would appear from this emphasis that the miracles were an important and essential part of Mark's kerygma. Mark follows the tendency of the early church in stressing the miracles, for in the early church the miracles were an integral part of the preaching and missionary teaching (Cf. Acts 2:22; 10:38). The miracles were a characteristic vehicle to which the early church pointed as a revelation of the power and of the saving purpose of God designed to arouse men's faith in the saving power of a living God.⁵

Men have interpreted the miracles in various ways. Some have denied that they happened and so discard them as at least semi-legendary. Some have called them mere wonder-stories told to excite credulous astonishment. Some have regarded them as accidental or incidental to the life of Christ. Some have used the miracles primarily as proofs for the deity of Christ and call them seals attached to the document. Some have pointed to the miracles as the symbolical fulfillment of certain Old Testament prophecies. Some have used the miracles to illustrate the infinite compassion of Jesus, others to show the necessity of saving faith, and still others to demonstrate Christ's answer to the intercessions of men. In the light of the entire New Testament message, the best view that has been set forth is the view of Richardson that the miracles were an

⁵Ibid., pp. 16, 19.

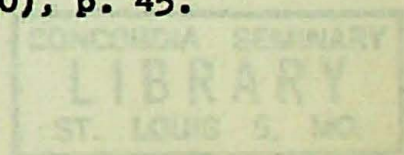
integral part of the gospel of Jesus, an essential part of the proclamation of the kingdom of God, a constitutive element of the revelation of God in Christ, a demonstration of the power of God in action,⁶ an evidence of the new order of life inaugurated by the coming of Christ. Hunter agrees with this view when he says,

So far from being an addendum to the Gospel of the Kingdom, they were an integral part of it; they were, in one phrase, the Kingdom of God in action. Preaching and miracles alike were works in demonstration of the Reign of God--complementary parts in one great campaign against the dominion of evil.⁷

St. Mark follows the pattern of preaching in the early church in the construction of his Gospel and in the message he proclaims. This is the same as saying that Mark's kerygma in general agrees with the kerygma of the early church. This statement is best supported by a comparison between Mark's kerygma and the representative sermon of Peter to Cornelius, the Roman centurion, in Acts 10:34-43. The similarities are striking. Peter preached this sermon to a Roman Gentile; Mark wrote his Gospel for the Christians in Rome. Hence, both had to supply their hearers and readers with the basic facts. Both Peter and Mark may be taken as representatives of the form of kerygma as preached to the wider public. The content of their messages is

⁶Ibid., p. 32.

⁷Archibald M. Hunter, The Work and Words of Jesus (Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1950), p. 45.



essentially the same. Like Mark, Peter begins with John the Baptist and the baptism of Jesus (Acts 10:37). Like Mark, Peter begins with the ministry in Galilee, emphasizing the healing, particularly "healing all that were oppressed of the devil" (Acts 10:38). Like Mark, Peter includes the later Judean ministry, the passion, and the resurrection (Acts 10:39-40). Peter also mentions the post-resurrection appearances. This is comparable to Mark if Mark 16:9ff. is considered part of Mark's intended message.

This comparison gives rise to two questions: (1) How representative was Peter for the kerygma of the early church?; (2) Was Mark merely Peter's interpreter or scribe? In answer to the first question C. H. Dodd says that Peter's speeches well represent the kerygma of the church at Jerusalem, that the content of Peter's speeches is what the author of Acts meant by preaching the kingdom of God (e.g., Acts 8:12), and that the early church's kerygma consisted in proclaiming the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus as the climax of all history, the coming of the kingdom of God.⁸

The answer to the second question is quite difficult. Eusebius gives Papias credit for calling St. Mark the

⁸C. H. Dodd, The Apostolic Preaching and Its Developments (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1944), pp. 21, 24, 56.

Ἑρμηνευτῆς Πέτρου . Irenaeus uses the same term.⁹ This term would imply that Mark was something like Peter's translator and that his Gospel contained merely the personal memoirs of Peter written after Peter's death and translated from the Aramaic into the Greek language. It is true that Mark was closely associated with Peter and was no doubt largely influenced by Peter, but Mark's Gospel is an expansion and more elaborate treatment of the historical section of the kerygma in Acts 10; it is actually Gospel (Mark 1:1), which is a virtual equivalent for kerygma. Mark's Gospel is more than memoirs.¹⁰

The proper relationship between Peter's sermon and Mark's Gospel is probably that expressed by Rudolph Otto when he says that Acts 10:37-43, which shows the character, outline, and content of Christ as Redeemer, is the "Stamm-schrift" of the three synoptics and that Mark's structure very little disturbs the original outline of Peter's sermon.¹¹

The following statement by Grant might well serve as a summary of this chapter:

⁹Swete, op. cit., pp. xxiiiff.

¹⁰Dodd, op. cit., pp. 46-47.

¹¹Rudolph Otto, The Kingdom of God and the Son of Man, translated by Floyd V. Filson and Bertram Lee-Woolf (London: Lutterworth Press, 1943), pp. 82-83.

Mark takes for granted the primitive Christian tradition about Jesus. What he aims to do is to tell "the Christian story as it was known and believed in the churches of the Hellenistic world a generation after Jesus' death."¹²

¹²Frederick C. Grant, The Earliest Gospel (New York: Abingdon-Cokesbury Press, 1943), p. 148.

CHAPTER II

THE LEITMOTIF OF THE MESSIANIC SECRET

A leitmotif is a motif that keeps recurring throughout an entire composition. In St. Mark this motif is the Messianic secret. The Gospel of Mark might be called the book of the progressive revelation of the secret Messiahship of Jesus.¹ During His life, Jesus sojourns among men as the Incognito, as the Messias absconditus. A few of the major passages for consideration in discussing this subject are the silencing of demons (1:25,34; 3:12), the silencing of the witnesses of miracles (1:44; 5:43; 7:36; 8:26), the withdrawals of Jesus (7:24; 9:30), the silencing of the disciples (8:30; 9:9), the concealing of the kingdom of God by parables (4:11,26-29,30-32) and the use of the term, the Son of Man (2:10; 2:28).

The problem then is not to establish whether there was such a thing as the Messianic secret. The problem is in explaining it adequately. Ever since William Wrede wrote his Das Messiasgeheimnis in den Evangelien in 1901, various attempts have been made to explain this leitmotif. Wrede himself believed that Jesus had no concept of Himself as Messiah, that the secret Messiahship was an intrusion

¹R. H. Lightfoot, The Gospel Message of St. Mark (Oxford: The Clarendon Press, 1950), p. 98.

into the tradition, a literary device invented by Mark himself to make a good story, to give movement and continuity to his Gospel, to account for the silence of the earliest tradition. He maintained that the Messianic dignity of Jesus was not affirmed in the Christian community until after the resurrection² and that the very notion that it was a secret to be kept until after the resurrection seems to betray it as a later insertion added by Mark or by some late pre-Markan figure.³ Albert Schweitzer, Alan Richardson, and others have agreed with Wrede's view to some degree. Richardson agrees that the command to secrecy was probably due to Mark's own hand, because Mark was grappling with the problem of Romans 9-11, how the Jews could reject Christ.⁴ Lightfoot says that Mark is trying to find an answer to the question why Jesus passed on earth as unrecognized, unacclaimed, opposed by His own people, and rejected and put to death by them.⁵

These explanations may sound quite plausible, but the fallacy lies in the opinion that Jesus had no concept of Himself as Messiah. The very name, Son of Man, which Jesus

²Vincent Taylor, The Gospel According to St. Mark (London: Macmillan and Co., 1952), p. 13.

³Frederick C. Grant, The Earliest Gospel (New York: Abingdon-Cokesbury Press, 1943), p. 161.

⁴Alan Richardson, The Miracle-Stories of the Gospels (London: S C M Press, 1941), p. 102.

⁵Lightfoot, op. cit., p. 102.

used fourteen times in Mark's Gospel, bears a kind of Messianic claim and concept. It is a name that is used only by Jesus except for Acts 7:56, where Stephen speaks of seeing the Son of Man. The name comes from the Hebrew ben-adam and the Aramaic bar nasha and bar-enash and has an Old Testament and Apocryphal background. Daniel 7 speaks of the Son of Man both as a separate individual and as a representative man. He is the one who represents the community, the Saints of the Most High, one who appears in the clouds and receives an eternal and indestructible dominion (vss: 13-14), one who takes on Himself both the suffering and the glory predicted of the Saints of the Most High (vss. 13,25,27). I Enoch 37-71 describes the Son of Man as a superhuman being, the elect one, pre-existent from the beginning, whose name is at present concealed, but who is to be revealed as the judge of men and the Messianic ruler in the kingdom of God.

When Jesus used the title, Son of Man, He was filling the concept of Messiahship from this ancient background. He used the name in contexts which describe His present authority (Mark 2:27-28), in eschatological contexts (Mark 8:38; 13:26-27; 14:61-62), and in humiliation and passion contexts (Mark 8:31; 9:31; 10:33; 10:45). The title describes a divine Messiah in contrast to the ruling conception of the human Son of David. Vincent Taylor says:

It is the name chosen by Him, in conscious preference, we must suppose, to the more colorless "Christos" and the human and nationalistic title "Son of David." It expresses the idea of lordship, of rule over the Messianic community, and its associations are supernatural. Strange to the Gentile world, it embodies His conception of Messiahship, as the more familiar names could not do, and perhaps in particular the idea of a concealed Messiahship yet to be manifested in action. . . . He reinterprets the idea in terms of the Suffering Servant, teaches that the Son of Man must suffer, and in this persuasion goes deliberately to Jerusalem to die, convinced that He is fulfilling the purpose of His Father, with which He has completely identified Himself.⁶

Stauffer says that this title was "the most pretentious piece of self-description that any man in the ancient East could possibly have used"; it was a name by which "Jesus had already taken the decisive step in claiming cosmic history as his own."⁷

In spite of the Messianic implication in this name, there remains something mysterious and non-committal about it. The title was not wide enough and rich enough to convey completely what Christ believed concerning His work and what He wanted others to believe when He used it. At most the title is an indirect attestation to be the Messiah. A direct public claim to be the Messiah would have aroused false hopes among the Jews; it would have impeded Christ's

⁶Vincent Taylor, The Names of Jesus (London: Macmillan and Co., 1953), p. 35.

⁷Ethelbert Stauffer, New Testament Theology, translated by John Marsh (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1955), pp. 108, 111.

own work and would have called the attention of Rome which had her Argus-eye directed toward suppressing another of the possible Messiahs of that day.⁸ The truth is that no current Messianic concept among Jesus' contemporaries answered to His own concept. Some people expected a political Messiah; the Pharisees saw Him as the ideal, moral Messiah; others were apocalyptic in viewing the Messiah as coming in a great cataclysm. Jesus did not want to foster these views; He wanted to keep from being misunderstood by the Jews; it was to non-Jews such as the Gadarene demoniac that Jesus gave the command to make Him known (Mark 5:19-20). Jesus retained His secret actually until after the resurrection. However, there was a gradual unfolding of this Messianic secret during His ministry. After the demons knew Him, He also gradually revealed Himself to those for whom it was reserved, to those who were somewhat able to understand, namely, to the disciples (Mark 4:11,34; 8:27ff.; 8:31ff.). A sort of climax was reached in the opening of the disciples' eyes at Caesarea Philippi (8:27-31), but even then the disciples are enjoined to silence. Not until the trial does Jesus admit His Messiahship to the rulers of the nation (14:61).

In summary of the last paragraph, Jesus did not

⁸Archibald Hunter, The Work and Words of Jesus (Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1950), p. 47.

explicitly avow His Messiahship in public until the end of His life, for He knew that He was not the Messiah whom the people expected. If Peter did not like Jesus' view of Messiahship, the multitude would hardly have liked it any better.⁹ To the disciples, too, Jesus had to reveal Himself only a little at a time so that they would not mistake the nature of this mystery.

The Messianic secret remained a kind of motivation in Jesus' ministry until the decisive event of the resurrection. Jesus told the disciples that they should keep the secret until "the Son of Man were risen from the dead" (Mark 9:9). This passage demonstrates that a purpose of the Messianic secret was to make clear that apart from Good Friday and Easter there could be no confession of faith in Jesus Christ. The miracles and everything that precede His death and resurrection cannot be understood apart from these enlightening and final events.¹⁰

The statement was made at the beginning of this chapter that the evidences of Messianic secrecy include those passages in which Jesus commanded the demons to be silent. It is a characteristic of Mark's Gospel that the demons bear unwilling witness to the Messiahship of

⁹Ibid., p. 82.

¹⁰Eduard Lohse, Mark's Witness to Jesus Christ (London: Lutterworth Press, 1955), p. 57.

Jesus.¹¹ Jesus is recognized as "the Holy One of God" by a possessed man in the synagogue at Capernaum (1:24), as "the Son of God" by the unclean spirits (3:11), and as "Son of the Most High God" by the Gerasene demoniac (5:7).

Mark 1:34 summarizes in a general statement that the demons "knew Him," or, according to the Codex Vaticanus (B) and other manuscripts, "knew Him to be the Christ."

It is evident that Mark meant these confessions as a Messianic acclaim. "The Holy One of God" is used elsewhere in Scripture to describe Aaron, the high priest, as the "holy one of the Lord" (Psalm 106:16); God is "the Holy One" (Isaiah 40:25; 57:15). The title is also ascribed to Christ Himself (Acts 3:14; 4:27,30; I John 2:20; Revelation 3:7). Hence the phrase has a definite Messianic significance.¹² To call Christ "the Holy One of God" was to distinguish Him from other consecrated persons. It was the ἀγιοσύνη of Jesus, His absolute consecration to God, which the demons recognized and feared. In Mark 1:24 and 1:34 the verb οἶσα is used to describe the demons' knowledge. The demons knew that Jesus was the Messiah because they had heard Him proclaim Himself as

¹¹Richardson, op. cit., p. 72.

¹²Taylor, The Gospel According to St. Mark, p. 174.

the inaugurator of the kingdom of God (1:15).¹³ They recognized Him as the Son of God who has the power to torment, βασιλεύω (5:7), and to destroy them, ἀπόλλυμι (1:24). They felt the presence of one who was stronger than all their kingdom, one who could and would deliver them over to ruin and destruction, one who would destroy the works of the devil.¹⁴ The confessions of the demons show "dass der Herr der Siegesfuerst auch ueber die Daeemonen ist, . . . ueber den Satan."¹⁵

The exclamations of the demons were not prompted only by the fact that they were afraid. They also hoped to do harm to Jesus and to mar His great purpose and plan of the Messianic secret by revealing it prematurely.¹⁶ The demons hoped to harm Jesus by calling Him by name. People of that day associated power with a name and believed that if you knew the real identity of a person, you would have him in your power and could strip him of his power.¹⁷

¹³Henry Barclay Swete, The Gospel According to St. Mark (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1909), p. 20.

¹⁴Richard C. Trench, Notes on the Miracles of Our Lord (London: George Routledge & Sons, n.d.), p. 191.

¹⁵Hans Juergen Ebeling, Das Messiasgeheimnis und die Botschaft des Marcus-Evangelisten (Berlin: Alfred Toepelmann, 1939), pp. 127f.

¹⁶Trench, op. cit., p. 192.

¹⁷S. Vernon McCasland, By the Finger of God (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1951), p. 91.

Es ist ueberall volkstuemliche Anschauung, dass wer den geheimen Namen des Andern kennt, ihn bezaubern kann. Die Daemonen versuchen Jesu Macht su brechen, indem sie ihn bei seinen geheimen Messias-Namen nennen.¹⁸

The Lord's reaction to the confession of the demons was a command to be silent, e.g., $\varphi\iota\mu\acute{\omega}\sigma\eta\tau\epsilon$ (1:25). The other commands to silence are in Mark 1:34 and 3:12. Various reasons have been postulated as to why Jesus silenced the demons, most of them associated with the Messianic secret. One reason that has been given is that because they were demons, by accepting their testimony, Jesus might appear to the people to have the evil spirits as His ally, a charge which His enemies were only too ready to bring against Him (Mark 3:22).¹⁹ A second reason given is that because they were demons, the confession was coming from unholy and unclean lips in the synagogue, a place that was dedicated to the worship of the true God.²⁰ The command to silence was given not because they were demons, not because their confession was a lie, and not because Jesus was afraid of the public; rather Jesus did not wish to have

¹⁸Julius Schniewind, Das Evangelium nach Markus, in Das Neue Testament Deutsch (Goettingen: Vandenhoeck and Ruprecht, 1949), I, 53.

¹⁹R. Jamieson, A. Fausset, and D. Brown, A Commentary, Critical, Experimental, and Practical, on the Old and New Testaments (Philadelphia: J. B. Lippincott & Co., n.d.), V, 138.

²⁰Joh. Ylvisaker, The Gospels (Minneapolis: Augsburg Publishing House, 1932), p. 175.

His Messiahship proclaimed at this particular time and in this particular way. It was not the *καίρὸς* for the Messianic revelation. The demons' public testimony did not harmonize with Jesus' own plans. That seems a more probable hypothesis than the theory that the injunction of silence was an after-thought brought in unhistorically by St. Mark to account for the strange failure of Jesus' contemporaries to recognize Him as the Messiah.²¹ In other words, it was not just that Jesus wanted to keep Himself from being known, but He had His own plan and time for accomplishing this end. Ebeling says that after Mark 1:23-26

die Kunde geht ihren Weg: Jesus Christus, wahrhaft Gottes Sohn, ausgewiesen durch Zeichen und Wunder. Moegen Daemonen schweigen, die Taten Gottes reden um so vernehmlicher.

He further says,

Das Verbot ist nur das Widerlager, um den Tatbestand zu demonstrieren, dass der Eindruck des Wirkens Jesu sich mit unvergleichlicher Wucht Bahn bricht.²²

Jesus pushed ahead with His teaching and His works of exorcism and healing in order to suggest by these words and acts that He Himself, as the bringer of the kingdom, was the Messiah, but His plan was to stop short of an explicit declaration to that effect.²³

²¹Cecil John Cadoux, The Historic Mission of Jesus (New York: Harper and Brothers, n.d.), p. 31.

²²Ebeling, op. cit., pp. 129, 131.

²³Cadoux, op. cit., p. 56.

Vincent Taylor summarizes what the Messiahship meant to Jesus in the following words:

To Him it was not primarily a matter of status but of action. In His own estimation Jesus is Messiah in His works of healing, His exorcisms, His victory over Satanic powers, His suffering, dying, rising, and coming with the clouds of heaven. Messiahship is a destiny; it is that which He does, that which the Father is pleased to accomplish in Him and which He fulfills in filial love. It is for this reason that He silences the demoniacs.²⁴

²⁴Taylor, The Gospel According to St. Mark, p. 123.

CHAPTER III

THE KINGDOM OF GOD

The kerygma of St. Mark's Gospel finds its basis in the concept of the kingdom of God. The phrase, $\tau\eta\ \betaασιλεια\ τοῦ\ Θεοῦ$, occurs fourteen times in the Gospel; the primary example is in the opening words of Jesus' Galilean ministry (Mark 1:15). In thirteen of the occurrences Jesus Himself uses the phrase, but He never stops to define it; there was no need for definition because every Jew knew the phrase and was desperately longing for the kingdom of God.¹ The phrase itself was not so familiar as the idea it expressed, for actually the phrase first occurs in the inter-testamental period as $חֵכֶם\ יִשְׂרָאֵל$ (Wisdom of Solomon 10:10) and in Rabbinic literature as $מַלְכוּת\ שְׁמַיָּהוּ$.

The idea behind the phrase, however, goes well back into Old Testament history and to the recurring theme that Yahweh is king both of the whole earth and especially of the chosen people of Israel. It involves the whole concept of God in the Old Testament. The ancient Hebrews quite consistently spoke and thought of God not as a neutral, abstract, and impersonal being, but as the one concrete,

¹John Bright, The Kingdom of God (Nashville: Abingdon-Cokesbury Press, 1953), pp. 17-18.

active, personal God, not a God who is a part of nature and history, but the God who is above and rules over nature and history. To Israel God was the God of power who had miraculously saved His people by the Exodus from Egypt and by the deliverance at the Red Sea.² He was the Lord who shall reign forever over all men (Exodus 15:18; Psalm 22:28; 29:10; 47:1; 145:13). He was the God who chose Israel as His special kingdom of priests and holy nation (Exodus 19:5-6). Israel began to associate God's kingdom with themselves as God's people. However, it soon became apparent that God's reign in the Old Testament age was to be only partly recognized, for one discouraging event followed another. The glory of David's kingdom faded; the nation was divided into two kingdoms; both kingdoms were taken captive. It was then especially that an eschatological hope appeared in Israel. The pious Jew began to dream of a blessed time when the living God would finally manifest His rule, overthrow the powers of evil, and show His grace and mercy to His faithful people. He began to look in particular for a Redeemer, a Messiah, who would establish the kingdom of God victoriously. Such a hope is evident in the writings. "And then His Kingdom shall appear throughout all His creation, and then Satan

²Alan Richardson, The Miracle-Stories of the Gospels (London: S C M Press Ltd., 1941), pp. 1-5.

shall be no more, and sorrow shall depart with him" (The Assumption of Moses 10:1).³ The Israelite could find support for such a hope in the psalms and prophets. He could look to the psalms of the Messianic king and read, "The Lord shall send the rod of thy strength out of Zion; rule thou in the midst of thine enemies" (Psalm 110:2). He could look to Isaiah and dream of a future period of peace, security, and prosperity (Isaiah 2:2-4; 11:1-9; 30:23-26); he could look for that coming Messiah who would sit on the throne of David (Isaiah 9:7); he could see there the central Gospel message, "Thy God reigneth" (Isaiah 52:7). He could look to Daniel and know that in contrast to the kings of the earth, God would set up a kingdom which would never be destroyed (Daniel 2:44). He could look to Micah and find assurance in God's words, "I will make her that halted a remnant, and her that was cast off a strong nation; and the Lord shall reign over them in mount Zion from henceforth, even for ever" (Micah 4:7). The Israelite could look to any number of passages and find there a basis for an eschatological hope in the coming kingdom of God.

The pious Jew was hoping for that time when the God of Israel would finally seize the reigns of government

³Archibald M. Hunter, The Work and Words of Jesus (Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1950), p. 70.

and when His sacred justice would prevail upon earth.⁴ He was looking for that immediate act of divine intervention by which the future kingdom would come and by which God would begin to dwell with men as an immediate presence.⁵ He was awaiting the eschaton, the end-event, the realization of God's age-long purpose in history, the Messianic age, the kingdom of God.⁶

E. F. Scott describes the historical background for the kingdom of God when he says:

Jesus fell heir to a conception which had passed through a long development in the religion of Israel. At the beginning we have the crude Semitic belief that the divinity of the tribe was at the same time its king; at the end we arrive at the magnificent hope of a new age coming, when God alone will reign over a regenerated world. . . . Jahveh the King of the tribe . . . could be trusted to overcome the powers of evil and bring all things at last into harmony with his will. It was not by any accident that Jesus, when he came forward with his message, chose out from the whole body of the ancient teaching this idea of the Kingdom of God. The more we study the religion of Israel, in the Old Testament and in later literature, the more we realize that this was its vital idea. Everything else had its root in the confidence that God is reigning and will at last put all things under his feet.⁷

Many interpretations have been given of the kingdom

⁴Martin Dibelius, Jesus, translated by Charles B. Hedrick and Frederick C. Grant (Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1949), p. 64.

⁵Ernest F. Scott, The Kingdom of God in the New Testament (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1931), p. 35.

⁶Hunter, op. cit., p. 71.

⁷Scott, op. cit., pp. 46-47.

of God as Jesus used the phrase. Some have said that Jesus completely took over the Jewish expectation of the kingdom. It has been described as a renovated social order built by men, a kingdom of self-respect, some ideal polity, or some earthly Utopia. It has been described as an evolutionary process. It has been described as the cataclysmic coming of Christ and the cataclysmic end of the world. Ritschl described it as "the organization of humanity through action inspired by love." Adolf Harnack and Cadoux say that it is man's legal compliance with God's will. Augustine, the Roman Catholic Church, and even some Lutherans have equated the kingdom of God with the Church.⁸

All of these descriptions have de-emphasized the theocentricity of the kingdom of God. Any attempt to explain the term adequately must begin with God as king. The primary meaning of βασιλεία is "kingship" rather than "kingdom," "reign" rather than "realm." The dominant idea is that God rules, He acts, He asserts and exercises His sovereignty and power; the living God orders nature and history and intervenes in history; He judges and He saves. The kingdom is that which God does and gives, not which God demands nor which men do or give.⁹ In the kingdom

⁸Hunter, op. cit., p. 68.

⁹Richardson, op. cit., p. 41.

parable of the automatic action of the soil (Mark 4:26-29) the lesson is that the kingdom is God's production; it is through His power that the seed grows and develops. The kingdom is that which God did in sending His Son to visit and redeem His people. The kingdom is not primarily people or a place. "Vielmehr wird an einen Zustand gedacht, an eine Beziehung zwischen Gott und den Menschen. Die Herrschaft Gottes ist da, wo Gott herrscht, wo er Koenig ist."¹⁰

The primary meaning of βασιλεία is the kingly rule of God, but one cannot think of God's rule apart from the object of that rule, apart from the people who are being ruled. Hence, the kingdom of God also means God's realm and dominion, the area over which God rules, His "Reich," "Kaisertum," "Herzogtum."¹¹ In St. Mark's Gospel, Jesus says that little children are a part of the kingdom (10:14), and He speaks of people who are able to enter this kingdom (9:47; 10:23-25). However, St. Mark's main emphasis is that the kingdom is God's rule rather than the realm over which He rules.

It was stated previously that Jesus does not stop to define what He meant by the kingdom of God because the

¹⁰ Julius Schniewind, Das Evangelium nach Markus, in Das Neue Testament Deutsch (Goettingen: Vandenhoeck and Ruprecht, 1949), I, 49.

¹¹ Gerhard Kittel, Theologisches Woerterbuch zum Neuen Testament (Stuttgart: W. Kohlhammer, 1935), I, 580.

Jews were well acquainted with this expectation. However, Jesus does reveal some important aspects of this kingdom in Mark's Gospel. He speaks of it as a mystery whose revelation is reserved for the disciples (4:11); He compares it to the automatic action of the soil and to the gigantic growth of the small grain of mustard seed (4:26ff; 4:30ff.). He describes the difficulty of entering it (10:23-25). He speaks of the kingdom as present (1:15) and as future (9:1; 14:25). Joseph of Arimathea was one of the few who had the right idea of the kingdom for which he was waiting (15:43ff.). Another man almost had the right idea of the ethical meaning of the kingdom (12:34).

It is not hard to see that St. Mark views the kingdom of God as the central proclamation of Christ. This is most clearly evident in the opening words of Jesus' Galilean ministry, ἤγγικεν ἡ βασιλεία τοῦ Θεοῦ (1:15). In their context these words tell us that the Gospel or "good news" consists in the proclamation and irruption of God's rule and that the presence of God's rule calls for repentance and faith on the part of men. Especially do they tell us that this rule comes through the instrumentality of Jesus and that the coming of this rule can be equated with the coming of Jesus. In essence Jesus is saying, "In My words and works the rule of God has broken in; I bring to you the kingdom of God; the kingdom of God is here because I am here." Kittel says,

"Jesu Christi Name und Botschaft, Jesus Christus selbst wird dem Gottesreich gleichgesetzt."¹² There is the closest connection here between the coming of the Messiah and the bringing in of the kingdom. If the people did not know about this connection, Jesus at least knew, for in Mark 9:1 He speaks of the kingdom of God coming with power; in the same account in Matthew 16:28 He speaks of the Son of Man coming in His kingdom. At least in this instance the Son of Man and the kingdom of God are interchangeable concepts.

In the above mentioned passage (Mark 9:1) Jesus closely associates the kingdom with power when He says, "There are some standing here who will not taste of death before they see the kingdom of God come with power." The biblical conception of God makes such a connection seem natural. At one and the same time God is viewed as the God who rules and the God who exerts His power, the God with whom all things are possible, *Σουβερῶς* (Mark 10:27).

The New Testament emphasizes the characteristic biblical conception of God as power by its constant ascription to Him of *Σουβερῶς*. The Hebrew mind does not dwell upon the Being of God, but rather upon His Activity; God cannot be known to us in His inner being, but only in so far as He reveals Himself to us by His own activity. *Δύναμις*, which means both latent capability of action and also power in action represents the Being of God in His dynamic aspect, that is, the only aspect in which we can

¹²Ibid., p. 591.

know Him.¹³

St. Paul shows the connection of the kingdom and God's power when he says, "The kingdom of God does not consist in talk but in power" (I Corinthians 4:20). This invincible power that Jesus silently works in the world is not only a characteristic of the kingdom of God, but actually results in the manifestation of the kingdom. Christ Himself said that the manifestation of God's power was proof for the presence of the kingdom of God; He said, "If it is by the finger of God that I cast out demons, then the kingdom of God has come upon you" (Luke 11:20; cf. also Matthew 12:28). In this Beelzebub controversy in Mark 3:23-27 Jesus spoke of His power to bind the strong man at the same time that He spoke of His opposition to the kingdom of Satan. Βασιλεία for Jesus included the idea of a Δύναμις before which the βασιλεία of Satan must yield. Jesus knew that the kingdom of God was operative in Himself as a power against Satan and his kingdom.¹⁴

Δύναμις is one of the characteristic New Testament words for a miracle of Jesus. St. Mark uses it in this way both in the singular and in the plural (6:2,5). The miraculous deeds of Christ are explained by the Δυνάμεις

¹³Richardson, op. cit., p. 5.

¹⁴Rudolph Otto, The Kingdom of God and the Son of Man, translated by Floyd V. Filson and Bertram Lee-Woolf (London: Lutterworth Press, 1943), pp. 43-44.

which work in Him (6:14). In one instance Jesus perceived that δύνamis had gone forth from Him after a woman touched His garment and was healed (5:30). In these passages the fundamental meaning of δύνamis is a mighty outward act that manifests the power of the living God.¹⁵

Closely related to δύνamis is ἐξουσία. After the first mighty act in Mark's Gospel, the people exclaimed, "With authority He commands even the unclean spirits, and they obey Him" (Mark 1:27). Ἐξουσία is the right of Christ to exercise the δύνamis which He possesses, a right that He had because of His unique relationship to God the Father. These mighty acts show the close connection between God and Jesus; they show that the power of Jesus is the power of God. The kingdom of God as a power is the assertion of God about Himself. In the synoptics the emphasis in the term, "the kingdom of God," is "always on the dynamic initiation by the living God of a new, decisive, and in some sense final, manifestation of his sovereignty."¹⁶

Whether this kingdom of God became a reality with the coming of Jesus or whether it was still something to be awaited in the future remains to be discussed. If the

¹⁵Vincent Taylor, The Gospel According to St. Mark (London: Macmillan and Co. Ltd., 1952), p. 291.

¹⁶John A. Allan, "The Gospel of the Son of God Crucified," Interpretation, IX, (April, 1955), 137.

kingdom of God could be strictly equated with heaven or with the future glory of the saints, then Johannes Weiss and Albert Schweitzer could be correct in describing the kingdom as completely future and transcendental.¹⁷ To a certain extent the kingdom was something in the future; Jesus Himself spoke of it as future (Mark 9:1; 14:25); the early church too was anxiously waiting and praying for the return of Christ and the consummation of the kingdom.

However, it is also clear that Jesus viewed the kingdom as already present. He said that the kingdom has come, ἔφθασεν (Matthew 12:28; Luke 11:20). He said, ἤγγικεν ἡ βασιλεία τοῦ θεοῦ (Mark 1:15). Hunter paraphrases this verse from Mark, "The time of which Isaiah spoke is come true. The Reign of God is now a blessed reality."¹⁸ Though it is true that the verb, ἔγγίσει, may mean "to be near" and "to be at hand, though not yet realized," yet in the Septuagint it is often used for the Hebrew וָּשַׁב and the Aramaic ni'ta, both of which mean "to reach" or "to arrive." The force of the perfect tense of the verb and the force of the past perfect tense, πεπληρώται, in the preceding clause are proclaiming an accomplished fact. What had formerly been pure eschatology was now a present reality. Men were no longer

¹⁷Taylor, op. cit., p. 15.

¹⁸Hunter, op. cit., p. 43.

dreaming of the kingdom; they were living in it. This was the new age that had broken into history. This was "realized eschatology."¹⁹ This was the good news that God had acted, the Gospel that the kingdom had come!

The kingdom as Jesus proclaimed it is at once present and future, at once actual and ideal, something to be received now and something to be entered into hereafter.²⁰ It is both the reign of God here and now and the reign of God in the new heavens and the new earth throughout eternity. The kingdom is present, but its complete consummation and final definite establishment remain an object of hope for the last times. The kingdom of God is a mystery, and a mystery certainly can include both ideas.²¹ The parables of the kingdom in which Jesus talked about growth illustrate clearly that the seed of the kingdom is already sown, but that this seed is growing unto the future harvest. In the future God will make fully manifest what He already is in the present.²²

¹⁹Ibid., p. 76.

²⁰Archibald Robertson, Regnum Dei (London: Methuen and Co., 1901), p. 75.

²¹Otto, op. cit., pp. 72-73.

²²Scott, op. cit., p. 21.

CHAPTER IV

DEMON-POSSESSION

The Nature of Demon-Possession

St. Mark's Gospel contains eighteen specific miracles of our Lord. In four of these miracles Jesus dealt with the phenomenon of demon-possession. In the very first miracle that Mark records, Jesus healed the man with the unclean spirit in the synagogue (1:23-28). This first miracle is a sort of representative miracle in Mark's Gospel. Later on Jesus healed the Gerasene demoniac (5:1-20), the daughter of the Syro-Phoenician woman (7:24-30), and the epileptic lad (9:14-29). On several occasions Jesus had dealings with demons in general (1:32-34; 1:39; 3:11-12; 3:22). He gave the disciples the right to exercise power over unclean spirits (6:7,13). The disciples found another man who was casting out demons in the name of Jesus (9:38f.).

From these examples it is clear that the phenomenon of demon-possession was rather well known at the time of Jesus. This particular belief in demons had not always been so prevalent. It was a comparatively late development in Judaism. The rise of Satan into an especially prominent place in Jewish faith took place during the Babylonian captivity and later. Influenced to some extent by the

dualism of the Persian religion, the Jews began to associate God chiefly with goodness and to attribute evil to Satan's power and influence. The Jewish belief in demons was also stimulated somewhat by the Mesopotamian and Egyptian beliefs that illness was caused by demons.¹ In other words, the belief in demon-possession was not in any way limited to the Jews; it was a rather wide-spread belief of the Mediterranean world. However, by the time of Christ, the fear of demons had become a marked feature also of Jewish thought, and the Jews became well known as exorcists of demons (Acts 19:13). This is not to say that the Jews viewed demon-possession or disease in general as a direct punishment or consequence of sin; on the one hand, demon-possession was a misfortune which might happen to anyone; on the other hand, it was an unmistakable evidence of Satan's power.² The Jews were looking for a Messianic age which would conquer this power of Satan.

Jesus shared this Jewish belief in demon-possession.

Cadoux says,

Like his Jewish contemporaries, Jesus believed in the existence of a host of evil demons, led by the arch-fiend Satan and at war with God and man. It was they who misled men into folly and sin, afflicted

¹S. Vernon McCasland, By the Finger of God (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1951), pp. 74-75.

²Alan Richardson, The Miracle-Stories of the Gospels (London: S C M Press Ltd., 1941), pp. 68, 71.

them with illness and misfortune, and sometimes drove them to madness by actually taking up their abode with them.³

Jesus did not just accommodate Himself to the current Jewish view of demon-possession as a relatively good working hypothesis for His day. The evidence of the Gospels is that Christ Himself believed in the reality of demon-possession and saw in the demoniacs the presence of the powers of darkness which had enthralled the weaker human will. Jesus regarded exorcisms as an integral part of His mission to conquer Satan, and He gave the disciples the command to cast out demons as part of their Gospel mission.⁴

Demon-possession is almost exclusively a New Testament phenomenon. It occurred on an amazing scale during the life of Jesus and the apostles. It was distinguished from cases of ordinary physical sickness (Mark 1:32,34); it was not an ordinary form of mental disease or just a mental state,⁵ even though the symptoms and outward actions in some cases were similar to those of a bodily sick and

³Cecil John Cadoux, The Historic Mission of Jesus (New York: Harper & Brothers, n.d.), p. 61.

⁴Alfred Edersheim, The Life and Times of Jesus the Messiah (New York: Longmans, Green, and Co., 1912), I, 480.

⁵Norval Geldenhuys, Commentary on the Gospel of Luke, in The New International Critical Commentary of the New Testament (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1951), p. 174.

mentally deranged person. In demon-possession the human nature and human will were under the alien power of the demon to such an extent that the demon was able to employ the human organism as his personal instrument. The demons or unclean spirits were personal beings who dominated the human individual, ruled his personality,⁶ and spoke through the voice of the human. The demons possessed knowledge; they showed fear; they tormented the person.

St. Mark in his Gospel uses several expressions to describe demon-possession. He speaks of having a δαιμόνιον or several δαιμόνια. Several times he describes the possessed person as δαιμονισόμενος (1:32; 5:15; cf. 5:16,18) and frequently as one who is "under the power of an unclean spirit," ἐν πνεύματι ἀκαθάρτῳ. Πνεῦμα ἀκάθαρτον occurs only once in the Septuagint (Zechariah 13:2) for the Hebrew שֵׁטַן הַבְּרִיָּאִים. In the Old Testament, especially in Leviticus (5:3; 15:24), the idea of uncleanness is generally used in the cultic sense of ceremonial uncleanness and pollution, as that which does not belong to the fellowship of God, as that which is impure in God's sight, as that which banishes from the divine presence.⁷ As applied to the demons, the

⁶Joh. Ylvisaker, The Gospels (Minneapolis: Augsburg Publishing House, 1932), p. 174.

⁷Henry Barclay Swete, The Gospel According to St. Mark (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1909), p. 19.

idea of ceremonial uncleanness may not apply very well, but certainly the unclean spirits as impure and vicious beings were an abomination in the sight of God; they were unfit for God's fellowship and were excluded from it; they were opposed to God's purity and holiness.

St. Mark says that the possessed person was ἐν πνεύματι ἀκαθάρτῳ. This is not an instrumental dative or a dative of manner. The preposition ἐν represents the Hebrew ׀ and means "with," "having,"⁸ "under the power of." It denotes the intimate connection between the possessed person and the unclean spirit, just as ἐν Χριστῷ and ἐν πνεύματι ἁγίῳ denote intimacy. "The two beings are conceived as somehow ensphering each other."⁹

The diminutive, δαιμόνιον, is more common in the Gospels, also in St. Mark, than is δαίμων. The latter occurs only in Matthew 8:31. However, both words mean the same thing, "demon" or "evil spirit." The form δαιμόνιον ἄσόμενος refers to the demoniac, the person into whom the demon has entered, the one possessed by a demon and under the demon's power.¹⁰ These demons were not the

⁸Vincent Taylor, The Gospel According to St. Mark (London: Macmillan & Co. Ltd., 1952), p. 173.

⁹Ezra P. Gould, A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Gospel According to St. Mark (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1896), p. 22.

¹⁰William F. Arndt and F. Wilbur Gingrich, A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1957), p. 168.

devil himself, but they were servants of Satan. Satan or Beelzebub is pictured as the prince or ruler of the demons, and Jesus Himself is falsely accused of being an agent of Beelzebub and as one who was empowered by Beelzebub to cast out demons (Mark 3:22). Jesus showed that Satan and Beelzebub are the same person by substituting σατανᾶς for Βεεζεβοὺλ (Mark 3:23). Beelzebub was originally a Philistine deity who served as god of flies; the form Βεεζεβοὺλ takes on an even more significant meaning of god of filth and dung.¹¹ In any event, either name was an appropriate name for Satan, for this prince of demons and father of sin.

In the actual cases of demon-possession, the demon and the demoniac were so closely joined that it is difficult to distinguish between the two. The demoniac spoke for the demon in him. It was really the demon who was addressing Jesus through the mouth of the demoniac, and he was addressing Him in the name of all the demons (Mark 1:23-24; 5:6-7). The demoniac lost his identity as a person and the personality of the demon lived in the man and took over the man's personality.¹² The words with which the demon addressed Jesus (Mark 1:24) not only show

¹¹Ibid., p. 138.

¹²Julius Schniewind, Das Evangelium nach Markus, in Das Neue Testament Deutsch (Goettingen: Vandenhoeck and Ruprecht, 1949), I, 53.

that the demons recognized Jesus as the Messiah, but they also show the contrast between the holiness of Jesus, ἁγιότης, and the uncleanness of the demons, ἄκαθαρσία. They show that the demons were afraid of Jesus and did not want to have anything to do with Him. They were directly opposed to Him. The unclean spirit showed his hatred and his power by convulsing the possessed person before leaving him (σπαράσσω, Mark 1:26). The same verb with the prefix σύν- occurs in Mark 9:20 and indicates a complete convulsing with perhaps some similarity to epilepsy.¹³

Demon-possession resulted in severe and violent actions and reactions in the one who was possessed. In addition to the convulsions, the Gerasene demoniac showed his power by tearing fetters and chains into shreds (διασπάω, Mark 5:4);¹⁴ he beat and bruised and probably even cut himself with stones (κατακόπτω, Mark 5:5).¹⁵ The same demons that possessed this man caused the swine to rush, ὄρμῶ, down the slope into the lake (Mark 5:13). Mark 5:15 implies that the man had not worn any clothing while he was possessed.

The daughter of the Syro-Phoenician woman was

¹³Archibald M. Hunter, The Gospel According to St. Mark (London: S C M Press Ltd., 1948), p. 33.

¹⁴Swete, op. cit., p. 93.

¹⁵Taylor, op. cit., p. 280.

presumably left weak and exhausted by the paroxysms of the demon (Mark 7:30).¹⁶ However, it is possible that this verse means that she was getting some quiet and rest now that the demon was gone. In any event, it would seem to indicate that she did not get rest while the demon possessed her. This example of demon-possession shows that the phenomenon was not limited to Israel and that Jesus' mission included the Gentiles. This girl and the epileptic lad (Mark 9:14-29) also show that demon-possession was not uncommon among young persons.

Many of the symptoms of demon-possession are found in the case of the epileptic lad (Mark 9:14-29). Taylor says that the symptoms of the case were those of hysteria or epilepsy.¹⁷ The father himself attributed the seizures to the spirit that possessed the boy and asserted that the spirit frequently cast the boy into the fire and water to destroy him (vss. 17,22). This spirit would periodically seize the boy, throw him down, make him foam at the mouth and grind his teeth, and cause him to stiffen or become rigid (v. 18). When the boy was brought to Jesus, the spirit showed its opposition to Jesus by convulsing or tearing the boy and by causing him to roll on the ground and to foam at the mouth again (v. 20). When the spirit

¹⁶Ibid., p. 351.

¹⁷Ibid., p. 397.

left the boy, it convulsed him once more and left him so exhausted that he lay motionless and pallid like a corpse (v. 26).¹⁸ These symptoms agree with epilepsy, but the boy was more than an epileptic. He was actually possessed by an evil spirit. This was clearly a case of demon-possession.

There are yet several significant points in the healing of the Gerasene demoniac which require brief discussion (Mark 5:1-20). The first point is that the demoniac lived in the tombs, *μνημεῖα* (vss. 2-3). It is not necessary to say with Trench that the tombs were unclean places because dead men's bones were there.¹⁹

Taylor says,

It is not necessary to find any special significance in the association of the demoniac with the tombs. Not infrequently tombs were inhabited, and the violence of the man, so realistically described, is enough to explain why he had been compelled to live in seclusion.²⁰

The second point is that Jesus asked the demon his name and received the answer, "My name is Legion, because we are many" (v. 9). The purpose of Jesus' question may have been to call the attention of the by-standers to the seriousness of the case and to the greatness of the

¹⁸Swete, op. cit., p. 201.

¹⁹Richard C. Trench, Notes on the Miracles of Our Lord (London: George Routledge & Sons, Ltd., n.d.), p. 138.

²⁰Taylor, op. cit., p. 279.

miracle, or to the great number of evil spirits, or to the fact that more than one demon can inhabit a single person. Compare Mark 16:9 where Mary Magdalene is described as the one from whom Jesus had cast seven demons. The purpose of Jesus' question may have been to remind the people of the ancient belief "that knowledge of the name carries with it power over an adversary and over a demon."²¹ Only secondarily could the purpose have been to call the attention of any Jewish witnesses to the miseries that were being inflicted on them at that time by the Roman legions.²²

The third point deals with the account of the demons' entering the swine (vss. 11-13). Some have said that if Jesus permitted this, He showed Himself unkind to animals. Others have said that Jesus permitted the demons to enter the swine in order to punish the supposedly Jewish owners of the swine for despising the law of Moses concerning clean and unclean animals. There is a certain appropriateness in the fact that the unclean spirits were brought into fellowship with the unclean beasts. Still others have said that the demons did not enter the swine at all but that the swine became excited and frightened by the actions of the demon-possessed man and rushed headlong

²¹Ibid., p. 281.

²²Swete, op. cit., p. 95.

down the precipice. In seeking an explanation to this event, several points must be kept in mind. First of all, Jesus did not send the demons into the swine; He merely permitted their request to enter the swine, ἐπιτρέπω (v. 13). Secondly, to the Jewish mind there was not any humanitarian offense involved in the destruction of unclean swine. To Jesus a man was of much more value than many swine, just as Jesus had similarly said, "Ye are of more value than many sparrows" (Matthew 10:31).²³ Thirdly, it is possible that Jesus allowed the demons to enter the swine so that the demoniac might have additional proof that the legion of hellish powers had actually departed from him.²⁴

The Healing of Demoniacs

In all four specific instances of demon-possession in St. Mark, Jesus brought His healing power into effect to cast the demon out. The method of the cure is not treated very extensively. Mark says merely that Jesus commanded, "Come out of him" (Mark 1:25; 5:8), and the demon or demons obeyed. In Mark 9:25 Jesus rebuked the unclean spirit and said, "I command you, come out of him and never enter him again," and the spirit obeyed. What

²³Richardson, op. cit., p. 73.

²⁴Trench, op. cit., p. 143.

seems noteworthy is that Christ used no magical formula; He laid no hands on the demoniac; He gave no symbolic actions. He merely spoke a sharp word of command and that word was enough. Jesus cast out demons through His own name, by His own word. That word was powerful to cure demons also at a distance as is probably the case with the daughter of the Syro-Phoenician woman (7:29-30). Jesus denied that He had cast out demons by the prince of demons (3:22), but He implied that He was able to cast them out because He had the necessary power to bind the strong man, Satan (3:27). The source of power to perform exorcisms was Jesus Himself; He was the one who gave the disciples the right to use His power in casting out demons (6:7). Another man was able to cast out demons because He did it in the name of Jesus (9:38). Jesus also emphasized the importance of faith and the power of prayer for healing at least certain kinds of demoniacs (9:23,29).

Jesus was not the only successful exorcist of His day, but He was unique in His purpose, in His method, and perhaps also in the effectiveness of the cure. The reaction of the crowd to the first cure gives evidence to this view (1:27). They were astonished, excited, and almost incoherent in their exclamations of surprise. They saw Jesus as the one who had the right to assert His power in casting out demons, ἐξουσία, and they observed the new and different quality of His teaching, καινός.

They had observed that Jesus did not use magical formulae like other exorcists but that He merely spoke His powerful and effective command.²⁵ The reaction of the crowd also showed that Jesus' cure of the demoniac served as a singular authentication of His mission and teaching. Here Jesus displayed a close connection between His teaching ministry and His healing ministry, for He teaches and then heals. Because He possesses ἐξουσία, He can well do both.²⁶

In each of the four miracles, it is stated that the demon departed from the person he possessed (1:26; 5:13; 7:29-30; 9:26). In two of the cases it is stated that the departure of the demon was accompanied by a cry, probably a cry of opposition and a final attempt to torment (1:26; 9:26). The exorcism is also accompanied by a final convulsion (9:26; perhaps also 7:30).

In the healing of the Gerasene demoniac, the imperfect form ἐ΄λεγεν (5:8) has been translated by some writers as an imperfect of continued and repeated action. If this is correct, then it would almost appear that Jesus was unsuccessful in His first attempt to exorcise the demons. This error can be avoided by translating the verb in either of two other possible ways. It can be

²⁵Swete, op. cit., pp. 21-22.

²⁶Richardson, op. cit., p. 70.

translated either as a conative imperfect, "He was about to say," or better, as an imperfect with a past perfect meaning, "He had said."²⁷

The account of the healing of the Gerasene demoniac gives abundant proof that the exorcism was successful. First of all, there was the evidence in the fact that the demons entered the swine and destroyed them (v. 13). Other people came and saw that the man who had been possessed was now clothed and in his right mind (v. 15); they were sure because they went and told others (v. 16); they were sure because out of fear they asked Jesus to leave their neighborhood (vss. 15,17). The man who had been possessed also was sure, for he obeyed Jesus' command to tell others what marvelous things Jesus had done to him (v. 20).

In summary, the healing that Jesus did was evidence that He had power over the demons and that they were compelled to yield obedience to Him, even though unwillingly.

²⁷Taylor, op. cit., p. 281.

CHAPTER V

THE RELATION BETWEEN THE HEALING OF DEMONIACS AND ST. MARK'S KERYGMA

C. H. Dodd has called St. Mark's Gospel "a book of secret epiphanies."¹ This means that on the one hand Jesus wanted the kingdom of God to remain a mystery to those who were not able to perceive (Mark 4:11-12). Jesus had His own time and plan for revealing the Messianic secret; hence, He silenced the demons. On the other hand, by silencing the demons Jesus was actually revealing Himself as the Messiah. The apocalyptic concept of the Messiah held by many Israelites included the notion of a hidden Messiah.²

A second Jewish concept about the Messiah was that the Messiah would triumph over the demons and Satan, after an intense conflict with them.³ Therefore, the success of Jesus in exorcising and conquering the demons was an attestation to His Messiahship; this declared that the

¹C. H. Dodd, The Apostolic Preaching and Its Developments (London: Hodder & Stoughton Limited, 1944), p. 143.

²Erik Sjoeborg, Der Verborgene Menschensohn in den Evangelien (Lund: C. W. K. Gleerup, 1955), p. 237.

³R. H. Lightfoot, The Gospel Message of St. Mark (Oxford: The Clarendon Press, 1950), p. 65.

kingdom of God had arrived in Jesus. Even though many of the Jews did not make this connection, the early church and the New Testament writers, including St. Mark, did see the Messiah in these exorcisms. The Gadarene demoniac too saw that Jesus who healed him really was δ $\kappa\acute{\upsilon}\rho\iota\omicron\varsigma$ (Mark 5:19-20). In other words, Jesus not only kept His Messianic secret by silencing the demons but He also carried out an essential part of His own plan for revealing the secret by casting out the demons.

Mark's kerygma is the message of the kingdom of God; interrelated with the kingdom of God is the concept of power as seen in the miracles of exorcism. Mark's emphasis is that these miracles were the revelation of the power of God in re-establishing the kingdom. His stress is that Jesus, the exorcist, is the power of God in action and that His mighty acts of casting out demons are works of divine power which His Father has done through Him. God demonstrated His power by subjecting the demons to the authority of the incarnate Christ.⁴ Jesus had power over demons because the power of God was with Him to heal (Luke 5:17). Mark is saying that the kingdom comes in Christ's healing of demoniacs not so much as claim and decision but as saving $\delta\acute{\upsilon}\nu\alpha\mu\iota\varsigma$, as redeeming power and

⁴Alan Richardson, The Miracle-Stories of the Gospels (London: S C M Press Ltd., 1941), pp. 8, 16.

might to set free a world lying in the clutches of Satan and sin.⁵ Concerning this power Kittel says,

Die Kraft Gottes im Evangelium besteht darin, dass es die Rettung vermittelt, dass Gott durch das Evangelium Menschen "aus der Macht der Finsternis errettet und versetzt in das Reich seines lieben Sohnes." Die *δύναμις θεοῦ* . . . begründet sich in der Rettungstat Gottes im Christusgeschehen, das die Satansherrschaft ueberwindet, und wirkt sich aus in dem fortgesetzten, tatsaechlichen Retten, das sich unter der Verkuendigung des Evangeliums vollzieht.⁶

One of the great themes of St. Mark might appropriately be called "The Conflict of the Kingdoms." Mark repeatedly pictured conflict in the life of Jesus, especially the conflict between Jesus and Satan (Mark 3:22-30). This was most evident in the cases of demon-possession, for the demons represented the activity of Satan in offering direct opposition to Jesus. They displayed their power against the power of Jesus. Jesus showed by His exorcisms that His power was greater than the power of Satan, that He was the stronger one who had come to bind the strong man and his house (Mark 3:27). Because Satan's kingdom was the ruling power among men when Jesus entered His ministry, an integral part of the redemptive mission of Jesus in re-establishing God's kingdom must necessarily

⁵Rudolph Otto, The Kingdom of God and the Son of Man, translated by Floyd V. Filson and Bertram Lee-Woolf (London: Lutterworth Press, 1943), p. 105.

⁶Gerhard Kittel, Theologisches Woerterbuch zum Neuen Testament (Stuttgart: W. Kohlhammer, 1935), II, 310.

have included the assertion of the power of God in mighty acts which overthrew the power of Satan. St. John says that this was the primary reason for the incarnation of the eternal Logos when he says, "For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that He might destroy the works of the devil" (I John 3:8). The Beelzebub controversy (Mark 3:22-30; Luke 11:20) certainly makes it clear that Jesus regarded His exorcisms as an essential part of the conflict of kingdoms and as proof that the kingdom of God was already actually present.⁷ The healing that Jesus did, as well as His preaching and teaching, was proof that God's kingdom had arrived.⁸ The ministry of Jesus was much more than a teaching tour; it was a great conflict with the power of evil. This conflict with evil began with the temptation of Jesus, continued in His preaching and His mighty acts, and ended in His death and resurrection. All of these elements in the life of Jesus must be viewed as complementary elements in the one great campaign against the dominion of evil, as demonstrations of the irruption

⁷John A. Allan, "The Gospel of the Son of God Crucified," Interpretation, IX (April 1955), 138.

⁸Hans Juergen Ebeling says, "Gottes Herrschaft ward in Christus reale Gegenwart," Das Messiasgeheimnis und die Botschaft des Marcus-Evangelisten (Berlin: Alfred Toepelmann, 1939), p. 121.

of the kingdom of God,⁹ and as proof that Satan's conquest was at an end. When Jesus said, "The kingdom of God has arrived" (Mark 1:15), this statement was in every respect the message of salvation, τὸ εὐαγγέλιον, for it said, "Satan's kingdom is at an end." This is the kerygma of St. Mark's Gospel.

Unser Markus-Wort setzt also den Spruch Matthew 12, 28 inhaltlich voraus: die Macht des Geistes Gottes, staerker als die dunklen Geister, wirkt in Jesu Tat, und darin erweist es sich, dass Gottes Herrschaft hereinbricht, und dass sie des Satans Herrschaft ueberwindet.¹⁰

It is not difficult to see from this discussion that the miracles of our Lord, especially the healing of demons, were an integral part of Mark's total message about Jesus and the kingdom of God. St. Mark emphasized the miracles because of his conviction and the early church's conviction that the powers of the new age were manifested in Jesus Christ. What the prophets of old had desired to see had now been presented to the eyes of the New Testament disciples. The miracles were not an end in themselves; they were witnesses to the fact that the age of promise had dawned, that the kingdom of God had broken in.¹¹

⁹Archibald M. Hunter, The Work and Words of Jesus (Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1950), p. 45.

¹⁰Julius Schniewind, Das Evangelium nach Markus, in Das Neue Testament Deutsch (Goettingen: Vandenhoeck and Ruprecht, 1949), I, 70.

¹¹Richardson, op. cit., pp. 43-44.

[They] were illustrations of the fact that in Christ the new age was even then intruding upon the present one: the power of the Kingdom of God was present in them and was grappling with the evil power of this age. . . . His miracles are "mighty works" ("powers," *δυνάμεις*) of the Kingdom of God, which in them advertises its presence; they are a taste of "the powers of the age to come" (Hebrews 6:5). In them the grip of the Adversary--who has enthralled men in bonds of disease, madness, death, and sin--begins to be loosened. . . . In the mighty works of Jesus the power of that Kingdom has broken into the world; Satan has met his match (Mark 3:27); the cosmic end-struggle has begun.¹²

In order to be truly the Redeemer Jesus had to engage in battle with demon-possession and to prove that He had indeed overcome the power of the evil one.¹³ "Die Daemonengeschichten muessen in den allgemeinen gattungsgeschichtlichen wie sachlichen Zusammenhang der Heilungswunder eingeordnet werden."¹⁴ This explains why St. Mark emphasizes the healing of demoniacs.

St. Mark's message to us today, as well as to the Roman Christians then, is the message that Christ's healing of demoniacs was part of His mission to re-establish the kingdom of God among men. Mark's message is that Christ has conquered Satan's kingdom. His message to us is that

¹²John Bright, The Kingdom of God (Nashville: Abingdon-Cokesbury Press, 1953), pp. 217-218.

¹³Norval Geldenhuys, Commentary on the Gospel of Luke, in The New International Critical Commentary of the New Testament (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1951), p. 172.

¹⁴Ebeling, op. cit., p. 125.

just as Christ overcame Satan then by healing the demoniacs, so the same Christ by the power of this Gospel kerygma is again and again today loosing men from the demonic grip of Satan and bringing them into the kingdom of God.

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¹¹⁷¹ Taylor, Vincent. The Gospel According to St. Mark. London: Macmillan and Co., 1952.

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¹¹ Trench, Richard C. Notes on the Miracles of Our Lord. London: George Routledge & Sons, n.d.

¹ Ylvisaker, Joh. The Gospels. Minneapolis: Augsburg Publishing House, 1932.