

Healing of the Man with the Unclean Spirit
Mark 1:23-28 *and straightway*

.. 23 And there was in their synagogue a man with an unclean spirit; and he cried out,

“A striking point in this miracle is the testimony of the demon to Christ’s Messiahship, which, however, he [Jesus] refused to accept” (Dummelow 725).

“*Unclean* in Greek is *akathartos* which means “impure, not cleansed, unclean, that which must be abstained from according to the levitical law, in a ceremonial sense, in a moral sense: unclean in thought and life, foul” (Thayer 169).

“An evil spirit is unclean in contrast to the holiness of God and may well cause both moral and physical filth in a possessed human” (*EBC* 8.872).

“The ‘demons,’ ‘unclean spirits,’ or ‘evil spirits’ of the Synoptic Gospels are rarely associated with Satan, and their control of a person is normally not an indication of moral turpitude. Usually demonic possession is associated with physical or psychic illness. At times afflictions of some sort are indicated, such as dumbness, lameness, epilepsy, delirium, possession and illness” (*AYB Luke i-ix*. 545).

“It is probable that this man had lucid intervals, or he would not have been admitted into the synagogue. While there, one of his fits came on, and he suddenly cried out” (Barnes 148).

24 Saying, Let *us* alone; what have we to do with thee, thou Jesus of Nazareth? art thou come to destroy us? I know thee who thou art, the Holy One of God.

“The plural is generally understood to prove the actual existence of the indwelling evil spirit. At the same time, it is a well-known fact that if an insane person is the victim of a delusion, he adapts all his words and actions to accord with it. If the insane person believed that he was possessed by a devil, he would be likely to speak in the plural” (Dummelow 725).

“What do you want with us? What do we have to do with each other? Why this interference?” (*EBC* 8.872). Jesus protected who he was as the Messiah, but this spirit of evil recognized him and cried out the truth. According to the popular belief of that time, to know a person’s identity and name was to gain magic power over him.

25 And Jesus rebuked him, saying, Hold thy peace, and come out of him.

“*And Jesus rebuked him.* Chided him, or commanded him, with a threatening, to be still. This was not the man that he rebuked, but the *spirit*, for he instantly commanded the same being to come out of the man” (Barnes 148).

The unclean spirit doesn't give up without a fight. This is mental warfare! God speaks and it is done!

“In all [Jesus'] words he speaks from the mouth of omnipotence. . . . The miracles of Jesus are part of the invading dominion of God which Jesus brings with his own person in proclamation and act. They are the dominion of God overcoming and expelling the sway of [so-called] demons and Satan” (TDNT 302).

26 And when the unclean spirit had torn him, and cried with a loud voice, he came out of him.

“threw. . . into convulsions (Greek *sparasso*)” (AYB Mark 213).

27 And they were all amazed, insomuch that they questioned among themselves, saying, What thing is this? what new doctrine is this? for with authority commandeth he even the unclean spirits, and they do obey him.

“*astounded*: the verb is very strong; it is found in the classical authors and sometimes in LXX to express deep amazement. This amazement has two roles: a) a recognition on the part of bystanders that something wholly new is at work in the person and ministry of Jesus, far removed from the practices of professional wonderworkers, and b) the teachings of Jesus” (AYB Mark 214).

“The first thing we find here is a divided sense of mentality, the unclean devil . . . We find that Jesus' radical challenge to the human mind is such that this devil is absolutely removed from his mentality, shown never to have been a part of it. Normalcy, dignity of manhood, are restored. . . . No one had witnessed such authority before, where the word is followed by the deed. Just like creation where God said (in Genesis 1:3), ‘Let there be, and there was.’ There is no lapse between promise and fulfillment from God's point of view. Breathing in the Holy Ghost is our way of imaging forth God's authority on-earth-as-in-heaven, imaging forth that ‘Let there be Light.’

“‘Let there be health’ is our breathing in the divine fact that the Holy Ghost is inspiring us to feel. Our utilization of that fact is like our breathing out, giving out what we've taken in. It becomes ‘and there was’ light or health. Just as natural as that. Breathing, ‘let there be,’ and breathing out, ‘there was.’” (Crisler, *Gospels* 2.136-137).

“Once again Luke notes the amazement of the people. The astonishment this time is not only at his teaching and authority but at his power” (*EBC* 8.873).

Amazed is *thambos* in Greek which means “stupefaction, astonishment, to render immovable, dumbfounded” (Thayer 2285).

Authority is *exousia* in Greek which means “mastery, jurisdiction, the power of rule or government whose will and commands must be submitted to by others and obeyed, a ruler, the sign of regal authority, a crown” (Thayer 1849).

28 And immediately his fame spread abroad throughout all the region round about Galilee.