

# An Identity Commentary on the Gospel of Mark

*And looking up he said "I see men, that as trees I see walking!" [Mark 8:24]*

## **The Gospel of Mark - Part 13: Sons of the Mountain**

Earlier in this Mark commentary we discussed the Pharisees and Herodians in a presentation titled "*the sons of Herod*" - and we explored how many Christians today are themselves unknowingly both Pharisees and Herodians in their doctrine and worship of government. Afterwards, we discussed the following account of a great concourse of people who gathered to Yahshua in a presentation titled "*Sons of the Land*", and explored how that multitude would have mostly consisted of Israelites - the lost sheep for whom Christ stated that He exclusively came.

But the land of Palestine was only a small pen of the greater flock of Israel, whose numbers were held in a vastly greater number throughout the lands of their various migrations and dispersions. These were the twelve tribes scattered abroad whom the apostles wrote to: a great company of mountains which would bear the footprints of their proclamation. It was only the sons of Israel who had received the gospel, as opposed to the lies which the Pharisees and sons of Herod parrot today.

Now as we proceed with Mark, we will read his account of the appointing of the apostles and use it as an opportunity to discuss several matters, such as the destined mission which the apostles were given by Christ and how they had fulfilled it through Him.

**3:13 And He ascends into the mountain and summons those whom He Himself had desired, and they came out to Him. 14 And He made the twelve (those whom He also named ambassadors), that they should be with Him, and that He would send them to proclaim 15 and to have authority to cast out demons.**

*This account is found in all three synoptic gospels at Matthew 10:1 and Luke 6:12-13. Having written his gospel at a late time, it is probable that the apostle John chose not to list the apostles for reason that his focus was on matters which were not much addressed in the previous three gospels.*

Both Mark and Luke place this account *after* Yahshua's restoration of a man's withered hand and His subsequent withdrawal from Capernaum (Mk 3:7-12; Lk 6:12), whereas Matthew places it *earlier* in his narrative (10:1-4; 12:15). If we rightfully assume the lawful testimony of the two other synoptic witnesses over the single witness of Matthew, then we should wonder why the apostle—who was, after all, summoned to the mountain on that unforgettable day (Mk 3:18)—deliberately places the event at an earlier point in his gospel.

I believe the answer to this question becomes apparent when we consider the structure of Matthew's gospel, because when it is compared with the other synoptics, it is clearly much more transparent in its thematic organization. For example, there are ten miracles grouped together in Matthew's eighth and ninth chapters which are found elsewhere at diverse points in the consistently mutual narratives of Mark and Luke:

#### **The Ten Miracles of Matthew 8-9**

Cleansing of the Leper	Matthew 8:1-4	Mark 1:40-45	Luke 5:12-16	Mark and Luke agree that this happened earlier in Yahshua's ministry, but Matthew places it as having happened after the Sermon on the Mount.
Healing of Centurion's Servant	Matthew 8:5-13	N/A	Luke 5:7-10	N/A
Peter's Mother-in-Law	Matthew 8:14-15	Mark 1:29-31	Luke 4:38-39	Mark and Luke agree that this happened shortly after the second calling of Peter, but Matthew does not place it there.
Healing of Capernaum	Matthew 8:16-17	Mark 1:32-34	Luke 4:40-41	Mark and Luke agree.
Calming of the Storm	Matthew 8:23-27	Mark 4:35-41	Luke 8:22-25	Mark and Luke agree that this followed the parables, but Matthew places them later at the 13 <sup>th</sup> chapter.
Legion of the Gadarenes	Matthew 8:28-34	Mark 5:1-20	Luke 8:26-39	All three synoptics agree that this followed the calming of the storm.
Healing of the Paralytic	Matthew 9:1-8	Mark 2:1-12	Luke 5:17-26	Mark and Luke agree that this followed the cleansing of the leper.
Raising of Jairus' Daughter	Matthew 9:18-26	Mark 5:21-43	Luke 8:40-56	Mark and Luke agree that this followed the expulsion of the legion among the Gadarenes.
Healing of Two Blind Men	Matthew 9:27-31	N/A	N/A	N/A
Healing of Mute Possessed Man	Matthew 9:32-34	N/A	N/A	N/A

This chart demonstrates how these ten miracles are scattered throughout the narratives of Mark and Luke but are quite mutually consistent in where they each appear - as opposed to Matthew who squishes them all together; thus indicating that Mark and Luke are stronger in their chronological focus. I did not realize until now that Matthew went to these lengths in his thematic focus, and if I had, it would have been a simple and concise answer for any of the supposed chronological "discrepancies" we have thus far seen between Mark and his gospel. We could wonder why Matthew did not include the miracle of the withered hand in his grouping of ten, but that was ostensibly so he could pair with the other Sabbath miracle of the planted fields, just as we see in Luke and Mark. *(The thematic focus in Matthew also leads me to believe only more strongly that Yahshua did indeed have His Sermon on the Mount after descending from this mountain where He appointed His apostles, as we see in Luke 6.)*

Matthew having placed the appointing of the apostles at an earlier point in his gospel is clearly just as thematic as his grouping of the ten miracles, which can be seen through the fact that there are actually *two* accounts in the synoptic gospels of the apostles being appointed by Christ. The first is when they are named apostles on the mountain as we read of here in Mark (Mk 3, Lk 6), and the second is when Yahshua later dispatches them to proclaim the good message (Mk 6, Lk 9); but these two accounts are merged into one single event in Matthew (Mt 10). What else would this be except another thematic merging just as we see in the grouping of the ten miracles immediately beforehand in Matthew? It indicates that the placement in Matthew is in no way chronological and answers the supposed “discrepancy” in the timeline with Mark and Luke.

That merging makes Matthew’s account of the appointing the longest (*both halves*), but if we only include the first portion which is parallel to Mark 3:13-19 and Luke 6:12-16, then it is actually the shortest:

- **Matthew 10:1-4:** 94 Greek words.
- **Mark 3:13-19:** 116 Greek words.
- **Luke 6:12-16:** 123 Greek words.

*Examining the first portion of this account one verse at a time:*

**3:13 And He ascends into the mountain and summons those whom He Himself had desired, and they came out to Him.**

Mark and Luke inform us that the apostles were appointed upon a mountain, which is something Matthew mentions only retrospectively near the very end of his gospel where he writes: “[Then the eleven students had gone into Galilaia to the mountain where Yahshua appointed them.](#)”<sup>1</sup> There the apostle teaches us that the mountain was in Galilee, though this could have been assumed from the other synoptics given that there was no sign of Yahshua leaving the region after withdrawing from Capernaum.

The use of the definite article here in Mark where he writes “[And He ascends into the mountain](#)” is also seen at Matthew 5:1 where we read: “[seeing the crowds He went up into the mountain, and upon His sitting His students came to Him.](#)”. Matthew then records Yahshua as having given His Sermon on the Mount, which appears from Luke (6:20) to have happened after He appointed His apostles as He does here, and so its earlier placement in Matthew was ostensibly for thematic purposes, we have seen that he was accustomed to doing. Even though Matthew in his narrative records his calling as having taken place later, the other gospels would actually suggest that he was appointed as an apostle on the mountain shortly before Yahshua gave His sermon at that very same place. Having been present to hear Yahshua’s Sermon on the Mount would explain why Matthew records it in much greater detail than Luke; and that brings us back full circle to the use of the definite article in both Matthew and Mark. The use of the definite article in these instances may represent how the mountain was intimate and familiar to the apostles, being the place where they were named by their Master, heard His Sermon, and later returned and saw Him after His resurrection. Therefore, Peter (Mark) and Matthew having been present for these events both use the definite article, but Luke having been absent does not.<sup>2</sup>

It is logical to assume that this mountain was close to Capernaum, but it is impossible to ascertain its location. There are a few places which are viable candidates, and while not many of them can be properly considered a *mountain* in modern vernacular, the word ὄρος (#3735) here in the account can also describe a *hill*.

The most traditional candidate is a modest hill one short mile northwest of Capernaum, which during the 4<sup>th</sup> century was the site of a Byzantine church. It has been conjectured with zero evidence that the church was built near an assumed location of the Sermon on the Mount, and for that reason it is often referred to as the “Mount of Beatitudes”. While its close proximity to Capernaum does align well with the gospel accounts, especially since Yahshua and His apostles visited what is presumably Peter’s house after His Sermon (Mk 3:20) - there is nothing which sets this hill apart from any of the others

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<sup>1</sup> Matthew 28:16

<sup>2</sup> Mark 3:13, Matthew 5:1, Luke 6:12

nearby. The only distinguishing difference is that the ruins of an ancient church rest on its slope, but the rubble holds no archaeological clues which attest to it having been built on the site of the Sermon on the Mount! The 4<sup>th</sup> century pilgrim Egeria (apparently contemporary to the estimated century of the building's construction) makes no mention of a church on the site which she was told to have been the location of the Sermon on the Mount. Egeria also wrote that Yahshua gave His Sermon from a grotto on the base of the mountain (or hill), and I cannot find any information on there being a grotto on this hill which is dubbed today "The Mount of Beatitudes". (This goes to show how many difficulties arise in trying to rectify these various traditions, which is not because of any dishonesty on the part of pilgrims, but on account of the thick fog of hearsay and generational exploitation of travelers. It was a lucrative business to exploit the gullible pilgrim, and for many sites there are multiple competing landmarks all claiming to be "the one". )

Another often cited candidate is Mount Arbel, which deserving of the toponym is a sharp cliff-face visible all around the Sea of Galilee. It certainly does have little grottos that could match Egeria's description if one were to give that any consideration; but the Mount is around six and a half miles away, while the site Egeria described was near Tabgha, a nearby town to Capernaum. Mount Arbel is often taken for granted likely on account of its status as a major landmark and grand vista of the Sea of Galilee, being repeated everywhere as the site of the appointing of Yahshua's apostles some sort of fad, but there is no evidence whatsoever that it is the location of the appointing of the apostles; not even the suggestion of a single pilgrim survives.

However, Mount Arbel's steep face and lonely beauty as compared to the rolling hills around Capernaum does bring up an important note of consideration, because it would make sense if whatever mountain where Yahshua appointed His apostles was more solitary than a single mile outside of Capernaum (*like the so-called Mount of Beatitudes*), given how we know from Mark and Luke that Yahshua ascended the mountain *away* from the great throng of people who came and pressed upon Him from Judaea, Tyre, and elsewhere. It is more difficult to imagine that Yahshua merely ascended a small hill right outside of town away from the passionate crowd (who were still there after He descended), since why didn't they follow Him? And it would have been beneficial if the environment was solitary when He appeared to His apostles there after His resurrection, even if He obscured His appearance when He did so. But away with such bold conjectures: Yahshua could have appointed His apostles on a hill one or two miles from Capernaum - or anywhere - there is no way for us to know and so that is enough with it. There are dozens of candidates one could draw from a hat, such as the Horns of Hattin, or one of so many places in the Korazim Plateau, or any one of the dozens of hills surrounding Capernaum and rolling along the coast of the sea of Galilee. The location of this mountain is not important for doctrine or understanding, and we will continue ahead and discuss this verse's more edifying matters.

We read in the previous account that a great and eager multitude from various regions hearing of Yahshua came out to Him after His departure from Capernaum, and reading the gospel of Mark alone might suggest that many of them withdrew by the time Yahshua and His students ascended this mountain. However, while Luke (unlike Mark) does not record anyone coming to Christ *before* He ascended the mountain, he does inform us that a great multitude from the same described regions were present *after* Yahshua descended from it:

**Luke 6:17-19** And descending with them He stood upon a level place, and a great crowd of His students, and a great multitude of people from all of Judaea and Jerusalem and the seacoast of Turos and Sidon, who had come to hear Him and to be healed from their diseases. And those being disturbed by unclean spirits had been cured. And all the crowd sought to touch Him, because power comes out from Him and heals all.

With these people in Luke being from the same regions described in Mark and present during the same time-frame within the narrative, it is almost certain then that they are the same multitude we read of earlier in Mark (v.7-8). These people are even recorded by Luke as having sought to touch Christ and be healed of their diseases, just as we saw in this gospel. Harmonizing the two accounts in this way

This photograph allegedly shows the sea of Galilee from a grotto within the general area described by Egeria.



suggests that the great concourse of people remained nearby and waited for Yahshua throughout the night upon which He ascended the Galilean mountain.

This might beg the question as to how Yahshua slipped away from such an eager crowd, but if Yahshua was able earlier in His ministry to discreetly depart late at night after having excited the entire town of Capernaum - then certainly anything is possible. As Mark wrote in that account:

**Mark 1:35-37** And in the morning, having arisen very late at night He went out and departed into a desert place and there He prayed. And Simon and those with him pursued soon after Him, and they found Him and say to Him that "They all seek You!"

Peter and those with him were certainly speaking of the denizens of Capernaum when they said "[They all seek You!](#)", which is explicit in Luke<sup>3</sup>. And so the people of the town who anxiously crowded around the door of Peter's home were not able to notice Yahshua slip away to a solitary place late that same night. In fact, Yahshua might have done the same thing here where He ascended the mountain for we read in Luke's parallel account that "[And it came to pass in those days that He departed for a mountain to pray, and was passing the night in the prayer of Yahweh.](#)" Perhaps much of the multitude was sleeping on the "[level place](#)" mentioned in Luke (6:17) when He ascended the mountain. (It is also possible that the mountain was difficult to ascend in the first place, and there are dozens of other variables that could be considered for pages on end.)

Yahshua is Yahweh God. If He was able to entrap an encampment of Midianites through sleep or put Adam into a deep slumber, then having ascended into the mountain apart from the crowd was nothing incredible.<sup>4</sup> But we shouldn't even assume that it was this miraculous, because while Luke infers that at least the majority of the multitude remained and waited for Yahshua near the base of the mountain; this should not be read as an absolute. Yahshua ostensibly ascended the mountain with His students since He was able to call out to them in the morning without descending back down first. This group would have exceeded more than just His apostles, since Yahshua actually selects the twelve out from among them; and Luke even later describes "[a great crowd of His students](#)" after His descent. It is quite possible then that some people from among the multitude also accompanied Yahshua up the mountain along with His students.

With that said, we will now discuss these students and how Yahshua selected His apostles out from among them:

**Luke 6:12-13** And it came to pass in those days that He departed for a mountain to pray, and was passing the night in the prayer of Yahweh. And when day came He called to ([προσφωνέω could imply they were in earshot](#)) His students, and chose out twelve from among them whom He then named "ambassadors":

These students described by Luke are no doubt those who were with Yahshua when He withdrew from Capernaum in Mark 3:7 where we read, "[And Yahshua withdrew to the sea with His students](#)." There could have been a considerable number especially since Yahshua had not yet given His controversial bread of life discourse where "[many from among His students departed for the former things and no longer walked with Him.](#)"<sup>5</sup> And so perhaps Cleopas was on the mountain this night, and even portions or the entirety of the seventy students whom Christ would later send out ahead of Him near the end of His ministry, all huddled on the grass and sleeping under the stars as their Master spent the night in prayer, perhaps only a stone's throw away. And then what happened in the morning was something very special, because after spending the night in prayer, Yahshua went back to His students and summoned out from among them a certain twelve. Perhaps the sun was rising over the beautiful vista of the sea of Galilee as the handful of students were called for a distinct purpose, a sight visible from any one of those many hills and mountains. And so where it says here in Mark that "[they came out to Him.](#)", we can better understand through harmonization with Luke that the apostles "[came out](#)" from the group of students.

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<sup>3</sup> Luke 4:42-43

<sup>4</sup> Judges 7, Genesis 2:21

<sup>5</sup> Mark 3:7 [...]

<sup>6</sup> John 6:66 [...]



While the apostles were fallible and with faults like any others, there is no doubt that they were pure-hearted men who loved the laws of their God, and Christ said concerning His apostles in prayer “to Me You have given them and they kept Your Word.”<sup>7</sup> Nathaniel, who was quite possibly the apostle Simon the Kananean, was said by Christ to be “An Israelite indeed, in whom there is no guile!”<sup>8</sup>

Perhaps then the ascension of the apostles in the mountain and the blessing of their appointment mirrors the rhetorically poetic words of the 24<sup>th</sup> Psalm:

**Psalm 24:3-6 (NASB)** Who may ascend into the hill of the Lord? And who may stand in His holy place? He who has clean hands and a pure heart, who has not lifted up his soul to falsehood, and has not sworn deceitfully. He shall receive a blessing from the Lord and righteousness from the God of his salvation [*Yahshua - means Yahweh is Salvation*]. This is the generation [race] of those who seek Him, who seek Your face—even Jacob. Selah.

The question being asked in the Psalm where it says “Who may ascend into the hill of the Lord?” is then answered: “This is the generation [race] of those who seek Him, who seek Your face—even Jacob.” And so perhaps the twelve apostles (Paul - not Judas) also stand as a type for the twelve tribes of Jacob’s loins and how they would be gathered to Christ through their proclamation of the Gospel; because having ascended the mountain they also “came out to Him”, and later through their proclamation the nations of the twelve tribes of Israel would be reconciled to Yahweh and come back to His mountain - thus fulfilling the near vision of the prophet Isaiah where it is written “And many people shall go and say, Come ye, and let us go up to the mountain of the LORD, to the house of the God of Jacob; and he will teach us of his ways, and we will walk in his paths: for out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of the LORD from Jerusalem.”<sup>9</sup>

Now it is exclusively written here in Mark’s account here that these twelve were those “whom He Himself had desired”, which is a sentiment Yahshua explicitly expressed to His apostles where He is recorded as having said in John’s gospel (after many of His other students departed for the former things) “Have I not chosen you twelve? Yet one from among you is a false accuser!”<sup>10</sup> (*Yahshua illustrates that He called the Edomite Judas for an entirely different purpose*). And then a considerable time later on in the night of His arrest, when that false accuser Judas Iscariot was fulfilling his evil but necessary purpose in treacherously gathering the cohort, Yahshua again said to the eleven in part that “You have not chosen Me, but I have chosen you”<sup>11</sup>

These are not extraordinary words: a plain matter in Scripture is that men do not choose Yahweh but that Yahweh chooses men. As Paul wrote concerning the man who was chosen out of all the Adamic nations to be heir of the Society, “By faith Abraham being called had obeyed”<sup>12</sup> And then as Yahweh said to the young prophet Jeremiah, “Before I formed thee in the belly I knew thee; and before thou camest forth out of the womb I sanctified thee, and I ordained thee a prophet unto the nations.”<sup>13</sup> As a summary of the whole body of Israel, Paul wrote to the Dorian Corinthian Israelites, “But now Yahweh places the members, each one of them in the body, just as He wishes (#2309).”<sup>14</sup> - and the word rendered as *wishes* there is even the same one used here by Mark where he wrote that Christ summoned those whom he Himself *desired* (#2309). So this was the destiny of the apostles.

As a digression, a man does not choose his destiny, but rather his destiny in the individualistic sense is predetermined in Yahweh’s design of his upbringing, strengths, background, and many other peculiar circumstances which happen in accordance with fate. God knowing all errors beforehand will even design the path of a man’s life in accordance with the mistakes which the man will make under his own free will.

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<sup>7</sup> John 17:6 [...]

<sup>8</sup> John 1:47 [...]

<sup>9</sup> Isaiah 2:3

<sup>10</sup> John 6:70

<sup>11</sup> John 15:16 [...]

<sup>12</sup> Hebrews 11:8

<sup>13</sup> Jeremiah 1:5

<sup>14</sup> 1 Corinthians 12:18

Men have destinies and so do races, therefore the most ultimate destiny of a man is determined by his race. Yahweh having made the Adamic race to be immortal - no son or daughter of Adam could ever possibly revoke that purpose from themselves. Each element of creation remains and abides in the purpose for which its Creator established it. Scripture teaches us that the preservation of the entire Adamic race is not based on works but upon favor, and Paul wrote on this mighty gift of God:

**Romans 5:12-18** For this reason, just as by one man failure of purpose entered into the Society, and by that failure of purpose death, and in that manner death has passed to all men, on account that all have done wrong: (for until the law fault was in the Society; but fault was not accounted, there not being law; but death reigned from Adam until Moses, even over those who had not committed an error resembling the transgression of Adam, who is an image of the future. But should not, as was the transgression [from Adam onto all], in that manner also be the favor? [from Christ onto all] Indeed if in the transgression of one [Adam] many die, much greater is the favor of Yahweh, and the gift [not by works] in favor, which is of the one man Yahshua Christ, in which many have great advantage. And not then by one having committed error is the gift? [Yahweh allowed Adam to commit error so that He could accomplish His gift in favor - 2 Cor 5:21, Gal 3:3] Indeed the fact is that judgment of a single one is for condemnation, but the favor is from many transgressions into a judgment of acquittal. For if in the transgression of one, death has taken reign through that one, much more is the advantage of the favor, and the gift of justice they are receiving, in life they will reign through the one, Yahshua Christ.) So then, as that one transgression is for all men for a sentence of condemnation, in this manner then through one decision of judgment for all men is for a judgment of life. As Solomon wrote, “But You spare all things because it is Yours, O Master, Lover of Life.”<sup>15</sup>

Reading the words of Paul of Tarsus there is no debating the fact that the entire race of Adam is saved, which was promised by Yahweh as early as Genesis 3:22. Therefore the eternal life of a man is not determined by his works but by his origin, though his works might determine how pleasant his eternity will be<sup>16</sup>. The works determine the rewards awaiting a man in the age to come but the eternal life itself is on account of a favor which cannot be annulled, otherwise it would be favor no longer.<sup>17</sup> And even that favor bestowed on Adam narrows down like a rushing stream and bridges onto other paths, from which a further distinct favor was placed upon Abraham and the seed of his loins through Isaac and Jacob. While the method of salvation for Israel was distinct from that of Adam since they alone had the burden of the penalties of the law (the death of the lawgiver Husband on the cross released them from those penalties) - even still both Israel and all of Adam are preserved on account of the favor which comes from promises.

And speaking of Israel brings us to another note on destiny: because much like people nations do not choose Yahweh - rather Yahweh Himself exclusively chose Israel to be His bride. As it is written in the 105<sup>th</sup> Psalm, “O ye seed of Abraham his servant, ye children of Jacob his chosen.”<sup>18</sup> And then in the 135<sup>th</sup>, “For the LORD hath chosen Jacob unto himself, and Israel for his peculiar treasure.”<sup>19</sup> And so Paul writing to the Dorian Corinthian Israelites - “So then, you are an anointed body [this can only apply to the race of Israel], and members by destiny.”<sup>20</sup> and then later writing concerning the New Covenant which was exclusively promised to Israel and Judah in Jeremiah, Paul having earlier cited that prophecy of Jeremiah writes to the Hebrews “And for this reason He is a mediator of a new covenant, so that from death resulting in redemption of the transgressions against the first covenant, those having been invited would receive the promise of the eternal inheritance.”<sup>21</sup> As Yahweh said to Abraham, “in Isaac shall your seed be called”<sup>22</sup> - and no one may add themselves to that pre-validated covenant of the Anointed seed.<sup>23</sup> As Paul wrote, “So then, it is not of he that wishes, nor of he that strives, but of he Yahweh shows mercy upon.”<sup>24</sup>

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<sup>15</sup> Wisdom 11:26

<sup>16</sup> Daniel 12:2, Matthew 10:15 | Luke 10:12

<sup>17</sup> Romans 11:6

<sup>18</sup> Psalm 105:6

<sup>19</sup> Psalm 135:4

<sup>20</sup> 1 Corinthians 12:27

<sup>21</sup> Hebrews 9:15

<sup>22</sup> Genesis 21:12, Romans 9:7

<sup>23</sup> Galatians 3:15

<sup>24</sup> Romans 9:16

This was a lengthy digression, but it is important to understand that it is always Yahweh who does the calling; whether it be people or nations. The apostles did not choose Yahshua - it was Yahshua who chose the apostles. And so again, as it is written here in Mark: Yahshua summoned those whom “[He Himself had desired](#)”.

Yahshua had summoned these twelve men on the mountain to be His apostles, but later when the devil Judas Iscariot having fulfilled his purpose promptly went off and hung his contemptible neck; the apostles understood that a replacement would be needed. But instead of waiting for a direct sign of guidance, they sought to regulate a decision which only Yahweh Himself can make by narrowing the lot between Joseph Barabbas and Matthias. We must again remember that the apostles were fallible men like ourselves, and while the lot fell upon Matthias, we never hear of him again even though he was certainly a God-fearing man. It is Yahshua who does the choosing, and sometimes His selection is contrary to what we would expect, as only God can accurately weigh the hearts and know how to best effect His will. Therefore, just as a personal selection happened on the mountain here, so did it happen on the road to Damascus. Being sovereign over the design of His will, Christ chose Paul of Tarsus, and said to Him on the road in part “[For this have I appeared to you, for you to be a chosen assistant and witness both of the things you have seen by Me and of the things I shall reveal to you](#)”.<sup>25</sup> And then later Prince Yahshua said to Ananias who was obedient to the command “[Go! For he is a vessel chosen by Me who is to bear My Name before both the Nations and kings of the sons of Israel](#).”<sup>26</sup> The success of Paul’s ministry is the proof of his appointment, and without his epistles we would have no knowledge of our ancestry as Israelites today. As Paul wrote to the Corinthians, “[indeed the assurance of my message is you in the Prince](#).”<sup>27</sup>

Despite being selected by Christ, Paul was a humble man - and he deliberately wrote to the Corinthians that the resurrected Christ appeared to *twelve* apostles in the barred room, which was no doubt a reference to Matthias who must have been with them at the time<sup>28</sup>. But Paul also understood that calling *must* come from God, having before written in the introduction of his epistle to the Galatians, “[Paul, an ambassador not from men nor through man, but through Yahshua Christ](#)”<sup>29</sup> Having written of Christ appearing to twelve was an expression of humility tinged with sadness, as he shortly afterwards wrote to the Corinthians “[I am the least of the ambassadors, I who am not fit to be called an ambassador, since I had persecuted the assembly of Yahweh](#).”<sup>30</sup> Paul’s selection despite his past was a model of forbearance, a lesson on the fact that no Adamic man is outside of the mercy of God, and that anyone can be restored from their former ways to have good works in their end.<sup>31</sup>

Now Paul having understood that he was called by Yahweh, also wrote to the Galatians “[But when it pleased Yahweh, Who selected me from my mother's womb and called me through His favor to reveal His Son by me that I announce Him among the nations](#),”<sup>32</sup> The verb translated as *called* is [καλέω](#) (#2564), which is to *call, summon, or invite*. That same verb appears here in Mark 3:13, where it is combined with the preposition [πρός](#) (#4314) [which conveys directional or relational movement, often implying purpose or intention] to form the compound verb [προσκαλέομαι](#) (#4341). This compound word literally means to *call toward oneself*; hence the rendering *summons*. In fact, even this compound word was used by Christ (who is the Holy Spirit) in reference to Paul where He is recorded by Luke as having said to the assembly in Antioch “[Now set apart for Me Barnabas and Saulos for the work which I have called \(προσκαλέομαι #4341\) them](#).”<sup>33</sup> The work for which Paul was called is defined by Christ’s own words and in the substance of Paul’s epistles. Therefore, while Paul of Tarsus was not present with the other eleven on the mountain, he was certainly as much summoned by Christ to be an apostle as they were.

Another note: Luke in the opening of Acts writes that the apostles were those whom Christ “[had chosen through the Holy Spirit](#)”; and Christ having spent the night praying on this mountain before selecting

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<sup>25</sup> Acts 26:16 [...]

<sup>26</sup> Acts 9:15

<sup>27</sup> 1 Corinthians 9:2 [...]

<sup>28</sup> 1 Corinthians 15:5

<sup>29</sup> Galatians 1:1 [...]

<sup>30</sup> 1 Corinthians 15:9 [...]

<sup>31</sup> 1 Timothy 1:16

<sup>32</sup> Galatians 1:15-16 [...]

<sup>33</sup> Acts 13:2



His apostles is an example for men - as we should always pray in Spirit when we are about to make an important decision in our lives. Having chosen His apostles through the Holy Spirit, it is interesting to note that the verse which we cited earlier from Acts reads in full: “[And upon their performing services for the Prince and fasting, the Holy Spirit spoke: "Now set apart for Me Barnabas and Saulos for the work which I have called them."](#)” (The fasting among the assembly is another example of how we should approach major decisions especially when the needs of our brethren are at stake, as putting away the flesh for a short time can help us straiten our focus on the Spirit. We touched on this briefly in our commentary, [Fasting for the Bridegroom.](#))

We began our discussion on this verse by talking about the mountain and we will end on that same note. Christ having named His apostles on a mountain might appear to be solely pragmatic, but I strongly doubt that the gospels ever have any arbitrary details. The children of Israel are the Mount Zion of Scripture, which is evident in a plethora of places such as where Asaph writes in the 74<sup>th</sup> Psalm “[Remember thy congregation, which thou hast purchased of old; the rod of thine inheritance, which thou hast redeemed; this mount Zion, wherein thou hast dwelt.](#)”; or where Zechariah prophesied “[Deliver thyself, O Zion, that dwellest with the daughter of Babylon.](#)”; and for that reason Paul cited Zion as one of the many symbols of the assembly of Yahweh’s people where he wrote in part “[But you have approached Mount Zion and the city of Yahweh who lives, Jerusalem in the heavens, and to myriads of messengers, to a general gathering and to an assembly of those of the birthright being registered in the heavens](#)”<sup>34</sup>

Mount Zion; the city of Yahweh who lives; Jerusalem in the heavens: this symbolism is used throughout Scripture to represent the assembly of the twelve tribes of Israel. In fact, the mountain is even defined as the house (of Israel) in Isaiah and Micah where it says “[the mountain of the LORD'S house](#)”<sup>35</sup>. Perhaps then the apostles being named on a mountain was prophetic of how they will judge those tribes of Zion in the regeneration:

**Matthew 19:28** [And Yahshua said to them: "Truly I say to you that you are those who shall be following Me in the regeneration, when the Son of Man shall sit upon the throne of His honor, and you also shall sit upon twelve thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel!"](#)

*Continuing with Mark:*

**3:14** [And He made the twelve \(those whom He also named ambassadors\), that they should be with Him, and that He would send them to proclaim](#)

*The parenthetical clause “[those whom He also named ambassadors](#)” appears in the oldest 4th-century codices Vaticanus and Sinaiticus, yet it is omitted in later manuscripts such as the 5th-century Bezae. For that reason it is omitted by the Textus Receptus favoring King James Version, but included in other more critical translations such as here in the Christogenea New Testament. There is no reason to doubt the authenticity of this clause, and internal evidence supports its inclusion, as Mark uses the term “ambassadors” again at 6:30, clearly assuming that his readers recognize the designation. We could conjecture that perhaps early scribe(s) deliberately omitted the clause, suspecting that the parenthetical remark was an interpolation intended to harmonize with Luke 6:13, where that gospel employs similar language regarding the naming of apostles. While the sentence’s train of thought is momentarily broken here with the parenthetical statement, Mark is no stranger to incorporating such remarks in this oral gospel—see, for example, Mark 12:42.*

It is evident throughout the gospels that the phrase “the twelve” of course became synonymous with the apostles, and also at 1 Corinthians 15:5 where Paul wrote “[and that He had appeared to Kephas, then to the twelve](#)” (Paul humbly counts Matthias, as we before noted); and it is also evident in Acts 6:2 where Luke writes “[Then the twelve summoning the multitude of students said "It is not acceptable to us, abandoning the Word of Yahweh to serve tables."](#)”<sup>36</sup> With the twelve (Judas Iscariot eventually excluded as his role was only temporary) being *made* here (as in distinctly set apart), and named “ambassadors”

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<sup>34</sup> Psalm 74:2, Zechariah 2:7, Hebrews 12:22-23 [...]

<sup>35</sup> Isaiah 2:2 [...], Micah 4:1 [...]

<sup>36</sup> Acts 6:2

directly by Christ Himself, no one can ever apply that label onto themselves. As Paul illustrated, an apostle is “not from men nor through man, but through Yahshua Christ, even Yahweh the Father”<sup>37</sup>

This is the first appearance of the word *ἀπόστολος* (#652) in this gospel, which is traditionally transliterated as *apostle*. However, the word is common in classical Greek and refers to “a messenger, ambassador, envoy” (Liddel & Scott); therefore to emphasize its pragmatic meaning and demystify the idolatrous connotations upheld by the so-called churches, the word is translated in the Christogenea New Testament (CNT) by William Finck as *ambassador*, and not merely transliterated as *apostle*. This rendering was chosen over *messenger*, so as to not cause any confusion with ἄγγελος (messenger/angel). The word *ἀπόστολος* is only seen again in the gospel of Mark at 6:30, and it is seldom found in the other gospels as well, being used only once in both Matthew and John, and then six times in Luke.<sup>38</sup> The focus is always on Christ, as it always should be and always will be.

Now there is in my opinion an important clause here unique to Mark where it says that the twelve are selected in part “that they should be with Him”, which might appear unremarkable on the surface - but actually reveals much about the ministry of Christ and even possibly answers an intriguing question from earlier on in the synoptic gospels, where Peter, Andrew and John are called to follow Yahshua despite having already been His students from the very beginning of His ministry. The fact that they were already students by that time is evident in the gospel of John:

**John 1:35-42** The next day Iohannes again stood, and two from among the students, and looking at Yahshua walking about he says: "Look, the Lamb of Yahweh!" And his two students heard the saying and followed Yahshua. Then Yahshua turning and looking at them following says to them "What do you seek?" And they said to Him "Rabbi," (which is spoken, being translated, "Teacher"), "where do You abide?" He says to them "you come and see." Therefore they came and saw where He stays and they remained with Him that day. It was about the tenth hour. Andreas the brother of Simon Petros was one of the two of those hearing Iohannes and following Him. [The second student being anonymous is most certainly John himself] He finds his own older brother Simon and says to him "We have found the Messiah!" (which is translated "Christ".) He led him to Yahshua. Looking at him Yahshua said: "You are Simon the son of Iohannes. You shall be called Kephass" (which is interpreted "a stone").

So John, Andrew and Peter began to follow Yahshua at the very beginning of His ministry, but we learn from the synoptic gospels that they at least around a year from this time (*as determined by the fact that John the Baptist was imprisoned - see our [commentary](#) on Mark 1:14*) were fishing in the sea of Galilee as if they never had any acquaintance with Yahshua at all. The appearance of that account has led to many Christians being confused into thinking that it was the day when those three men first met Yahshua, but this is something which the gospel of John demonstrates to certainly not be the case. What was happening then? Why were they at least one year later or so fishing by the sea of Galilee instead of following Christ? I believe the answer is really quite simple.

Yahshua had many students from a very early time in His ministry. We know this because John writes that at a point around six months into His ministry (*because it was the first Passover six months after His immersion in September of 28 AD*) “that the Pharisees heard that ‘Yahshua makes and immerses more students than Iohannes’ (even though Yahshua Himself has not immersed, but His students)”.<sup>39</sup> And since John the Baptist’s ministry was a phenomenon which struck fear into the heart of Herod Antipas and was remembered in the pages of Josephus, Yahshua having made more students than John the Baptist certainly indicates a very sizeable number of followers indeed.

While we should expect that many of them were zealous for their Teacher, most of these students would not have been able to follow Him for months or years without ever returning to their homes and vocations, as Yahshua was an itinerant teacher who was constantly traveling and revisiting villages and assembly halls. Our Prince did feed the crowds of the 5,000 and 4,000 men (not including women and children) who came to hear Him, but these miracles were probably at least two and a half years into His ministry and were ostensibly unprecedented at that time, since the apostles had no expectation that

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<sup>37</sup> Galatians 1:1 [...]

<sup>38</sup> Matthew 10:2, John 13:16, Luke 6:13, 9:10, 11:49, 17:5, 22:14, 24:10

<sup>39</sup> John 4:1-2 [...]

Yahshua would multiply the loaves and the fish.<sup>40</sup> Even before feeding the four thousand, Yahshua commented on how the crowds would have to return to their homes, being recorded as having said as it is in Mark "I am deeply moved for the crowd, because already they have remained with Me for three days and they do not have anything which they may eat. And if I let them go away to their house fasting, they shall faint on the road, and some of them have come from afar!"<sup>41</sup>

It is reasonable to conjecture that the twelve also returned to their homes and vocations from time to time before they were named apostles and selected to "be with Him" from that time forward, which was at least one year into His ministry. This does not mean that the apostles did not have a close friendship with Yahshua before that point, as most of them followed Him from a very early time and we have already seen Yahshua recorded as entering the home of Peter once or twice already. In fact, having settled in Capernaum for the duration of His ministry, we have already conjectured that Yahshua might have lodged in Peter's home often, and perhaps many of the apostles being fishermen often went out to the sea of Galilee whenever they returned to town. (*I want to say that we should not unreasonably interpret "that they should be with Him" in the strictest sense, because Yahshua would later send out His apostles [Mk 6:7] and it is evident that at times they would go off on certain ventures [Mk 11:2, 14:13]*)

So the apostles not having been selected to "be with Him" until this point might explain why Peter, Andrew, and John were fishing by the sea of Galilee; though this is ultimately conjectural.

The apostles would have become more recognizable to the public than the wider group of students after they were selected to "be with Him", which can be seen in the circumstances of Peter's denial when one of the servant girls of the high priests sitting by the fire said "You also were with the Nazarene Yahshua!" and then another by the gate said "He was with Yahshua the Nazoraian!" Even later after Yahshua's ascension, we read from Acts "And observing the frankness of Petros and Iohannes, and perceiving that they are unlearned and unskilled men, wondering they then recognized them, that they were with Yahshua."<sup>42</sup>

As for the rest of Yahshua's students, many of them in the days when He fed the five-thousand (probably two and a half years into His ministry) departed from Him for reason of their offense from His bread of life discourse. The twelve remained by His side however, as Yahshua chose them to be His apostles and it was His sovereign desire that they should "be with Him":

**John 6:66-71** With this many from among His students departed for the former things and no longer walked with Him. Therefore Yahshua said to the twelve: "Do you not also wish to go away?" Simon Petros replied to Him: "Prince, to what shall we depart? You have the words of life, and we believe and know that You are the Holy One of Yahweh!" Yahshua replied to them: "Have I not chosen you twelve? Yet one from among you is a false accuser!" (Now He spoke about Ioudas the son of Simon Iskarioth, for he was going to betray Him, being one of the twelve.) [*Yahshua indicates that Judas was chosen for an entirely different purpose*]

Having stayed with Yahshua throughout His trials and incredibly magnifying moments, these eleven apostles were uniquely equipped to testify of the things which they saw. Being close to Christ also allowed the apostles to relate their personal memories of the Prince to others, such as their intimate last Passover with Him on the night of His arrest.<sup>43</sup> And so the apostle John wrote, "that which was from the beginning, that which we have heard, that which we have seen with our eyes, that which we have observed, and our hands have touched concerning the Word of Life"<sup>44</sup> - and then Peter, the oral source of the gospel of Mark: "For not following after cleverly devised myths have we made known to you the power and presence of our Prince Yahshua Christ, but having been spectators of His majesty."<sup>45</sup> Peter

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<sup>40</sup> The feeding of the five thousand was during the second or third Passover of Yahshua's ministry (John 6:4). But since John only records three of the total four Passovers of Yahshua's ministry (2:13, 6:4, 13:1), and also since the gospels become more detailed as they near the end of His ministry, this Passover was more likely the third of His ministry than the second.

<sup>41</sup> Mark 8:2-3

<sup>42</sup> Mark 14:67, Matthew 26:71, Acts 4:13

<sup>43</sup> Matthew 26:20

<sup>44</sup> 1 John 1:1

<sup>45</sup> 2 Peter 1:16

also wrote in his first surviving epistle that he was “a witness of the sufferings of Christ.”<sup>46</sup> - and their testimonies were uniquely and intimately powerful, being also among the first and most personal witnesses of His resurrection, and they remained faithful followers and friends of Yahshua to the end of their earthly lives. They would not allow persecution to muffle their mouths, as John and Peter together said to the godless high priests and their gathering in Jerusalem, “For we are not able to not speak of the things which we have seen and we have heard.”<sup>47</sup>

The apostles were shown a model for service in how Yahshua Himself served them, and they were commanded to abide in such things and to similarly love and serve one another. If they did not abide in these teachings then they would not be able to be “with Him” - which is why Christ in John is recorded as having warned Peter that if he did not allow Him to wash his feet as a model of humility and service for kinsmen, that “you do not have a part with Me!”<sup>48</sup> To whom much is given more is expected, and the apostles of course prevailed and remained true and steadfast throughout their lives, and this is another way in which the apostles were “with Him” as it says here in Mark - abiding in His commandments and bearing much fruit through Him. As Yahshua is recorded in the gospel of John as having said to His apostles in part, “I am the Vine, you are the branches. He who is abiding in Me and I in him, he bears much fruit, for apart from Me you are not able to do anything.” and also, “In this My Father is honored: that you would bear much fruit, and you would be My students.”, and again in regards to Him having desired them to be His apostles, “You have not chosen Me, but I have chosen you and I have ordained you in order that you should go and bear fruit and your fruit would abide”<sup>49</sup> The apostles being “with” Yahshua abided in His commandments and their works were blessed with much fruit as they gathered the sheep to the Shepherd. Those who do not keep His commandments but who teach things contrary to the Gospel are not “with Him”, as they are only scattering the flock which is supposed to be gathered with one consent to the Master. As our Prince warned, “He who is not with Me is against Me, and He not gathering with Me scatters!”<sup>50</sup>

Something I want to end on when it comes to this subject is something which moves me, and it is that the desire (#2309) Yahshua had for the apostles to be with Him during His earthly life (Mk 3:13-14) extended into His heavenly, and so He prayed on the night of His arrest: “Father, that which You gave to Me, I wish (#2309) that where I am, they also would be with Me, in order that they would see My honor which You gave to Me because You have loved Me before the founding of Society.”<sup>51</sup>

Now with an *ἀπόστολος* essentially being a representative being sent with a specific message or mission (for example see Christ’s use of the word *ἀπόστολος* at John 13:16), and then reading here in Mark that Christ “would send them to proclaim” - the verb rendered as *send* actually being *ἀποστέλλω* (#649) which is closely related to *ἀπόστολος* (*ambassador*); then it is evident that they were called *ambassadors* because they were being *sent* (*ἀποστέλλω*) to proclaim the good message. While it might be obvious, Mark 3:14 is possibly the earliest explicit witness of this fact in the chronology of the gospel narratives.

And so we read here in Mark that the apostles were going to be sent to proclaim, and they were actually being prepared to take on a torch which was lit in the opening chapter of this gospel:

**Mark 1:14-15** And after the handing over of Iohannes, Yahshua had gone into Galilaia proclaiming the good message of Yahweh and saying that "The time is fulfilled, and the Kingdom of Yahweh has neared! Repent and have faith in the good message!"

Yahshua was essentially proclaiming the good message of Yahweh from the beginning of His ministry, and this is one of the many purposes for which He was sent by the Father, as He Himself expressed when reading the prophetic announcement of His ministry from the Isaiah scroll in Nazareth: “The Spirit of Yahweh is upon Me, because He has anointed Me to bring good news to the poor. He has sent

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<sup>46</sup> Luke 22:28, 1 Peter 5:1 [...]

<sup>47</sup> Acts 4:20

<sup>48</sup> John 13:8 [...]

<sup>49</sup> John 15:5, 8, 16 [...]

<sup>50</sup> Matthew 12:30

<sup>51</sup> John 17:24

Me to proclaim release to the captives, and a restoration of sight to the blind. To send off the broken with release. To proclaim a year acceptable by Yahweh!”<sup>52</sup>

But Yahshua could not directly proclaim this good message to the dispersed nations of Israel - as it was necessary for heaven to receive Him until the appointed things be fulfilled<sup>53</sup>. For that reason He would have to send out His workers, just as we read in Matthew at a point later than here in His ministry: “Great is the harvest, but the workers are few! Therefore it is necessary for the lord of the harvest, that he send out workers into his harvest!”<sup>54</sup> When Christ later sent the apostles out, He actually instructed them to say the same thing which He Himself had proclaimed from the beginning of His ministry, which is a direct demonstration of how they entered into the precise course of His labor: “And going you proclaim, saying that ‘the kingdom of the heavens has neared!’”<sup>55</sup> *(It is not that the apostles were the only ones sent to proclaim these things and work in the harvest, as even the seventy-two were given similar instructions, but the apostles were vessels chosen by Christ to bear a more direct testimony.)*

And so the apostles were being sent to proclaim that which Christ Himself proclaimed, and He had expressed this at a very early time in His ministry, (even earlier than anything past Mark 1:13). There He explained to those of the twelve who were present (among other of His students) that they were entering into the same labor for which He was sent:

**John 4:34-38** Yahshua says to them: "My food is that I shall do the will of He who has sent Me and that I shall finish His work. Do you not say that 'There are still four months and the harvest comes'? Behold, I say to you: lift up your eyes and see the fields, that they are already white for harvest! He reaping receives a wage, and gathers fruit for eternal life, that he sowing and he reaping would rejoice together. For in this the word is true: that it is one who sows and another who reaps. I have sent you to reap for that which you did not labor. Others labored and you entered in for their labor.

There in John 4 Yahshua is recorded as having repeated a proverb that “it is one who sows and another who reaps” in reference to the promised reconciliation of divorced and estranged Israel, who were sown abroad in their various migrations and dispersions, but then reaped and gathered back to their God through the gospel which the apostles were to proclaim. The words of Yahshua evoke the language of the prophet Hosea, where it is written “Then shall the children of Judah and the children of Israel be gathered together, and appoint themselves one head [Christ], and they shall come up out of the land: for great shall be the day of Jezreel.”<sup>56</sup> Jezreel means *God sows*, and is a reference in the immediate sense to how the tribes of Israel were sown abroad and planted in other lands from which they ultimately received the Gospel. As Yahweh said through His prophet Zechariah, “And I will sow them among the people: and they shall remember me in far countries; and they shall live with their children, and turn again.”<sup>57</sup>

It was necessary then for the good news of reconciliation to be proclaimed in all the places where the nations of the lost sheep of the house of Israel had been sown abroad by Yahweh in their migrations and dispersions. And so the apostles entering into the labor of God announced the Gospel to these lost sheep of the house of Israel, who had become many nations in their various migrations and dispersions at diverse times. As James wrote in the opening of his lone surviving epistle, as it is rendered in the King James, “to the twelve tribes which are scattered abroad”<sup>58</sup> - and Peter to the sojourning (sown abroad) Israelites in lands of which some were announced as destinations for those deported by the Assyrians in Isaiah 66, those whom “were ‘not a people’ [in their divorce] but now are the people of Yahweh [in their reconciliation], those who ‘have not been shown mercy’ but are now shown mercy.” - and Peter there quoted from Hosea in a passage following the same context of that of Jezreel.<sup>59</sup>

With many prophecies speaking of the reconciliation and renewal of faith among the scattered tribes of Israel who had forgotten their identity, Paul of Tarsus understood how this had always implied from the

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<sup>52</sup> Luke 4:18-19

<sup>53</sup> Acts 3:21

<sup>54</sup> Matthew 9:37-38 [...]

<sup>55</sup> Matthew 10:7

<sup>56</sup> Hosea 1:11

<sup>57</sup> Zechariah 10:9

<sup>58</sup> James 1:1 [...]

<sup>59</sup> 1 Peter 2:10 (Hosea 2:23)



beginning that the news of their reconciliation would have to be delivered in some way. Paul would have quickly recognized its accomplishment through the proclamation of the apostles whom Yahshua “sent”, and so he wrote to the Romans in a passage which compounds very nicely with this verse of Mark:

**Romans 10:14-15** How then would they call to Him that they have not believed? And how would they believe of Him they have not heard? And how would they hear apart from proclamation? And how would they proclaim, unless they are sent? Just as it is written, "How fair are the feet of those bringing the good news of good things." (*underlined to show symmetry with Mark*)

The Scripture which Paul quotes there in Romans is Isaiah 52:7, a passage which itself compounds very nicely with the fact that the apostles were appointed upon a mountain:

**Isaiah 52:7** How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him that bringeth good tidings, that publisheth peace; that bringeth good tidings of good, that publisheth salvation; that saith unto Zion, Thy God reigneth!

Hills and mountains in prophecy often represent nations small and large, and so the good news was delivered to several mountain nations which Isaiah collectively defined as “Zion”. The children of Israel can simultaneously be considered *one* single mountain of Zion, and also *several* mountain nations upon which the feet of the apostles were sent. There is no contradiction. As Yahweh said to Jacob concerning the promises to Abraham which he became an heir of: “I am God Almighty: be fruitful and multiply; a nation and a company of nations shall be of thee, and kings shall come out of thy loins”<sup>60</sup> Israel was always promised to become many nations, and Christ had given the apostles explicit instructions to announce the gospel to this company of nations when He commanded them to “instruct all of the Nations”<sup>61</sup>. The definite article (*the*) He uses in saying “the nations” indicating those which had sprung up from the loins of Abraham through Isaac and Jacob, and who were reconciled to Himself on the cross: the mountain nations of Zion which the prophet Isaiah and many others spoke of. Yahshua Christ has no disagreement with His prophets.

We will end the discussion of this verse by touching on the mountain yet again.

Yahshua’s command to “instruct all of the Nations” was given on this same Galilean mountain upon which the apostles were named here in Mark, and so it is evident that a reason they were appointed on a mountain is because the mountain itself stands as a type for the nations of Israel to whom they would be sent. Mount Zion. As we read from another prophecy of Isaiah:

**Isaiah 40:9** O Zion, that bringest good tidings [*the gospel*], get thee up [*ascend*] into the high mountain; O Jerusalem, that bringest good tidings, lift up thy voice with strength; lift it up, be not afraid; say unto the cities of Judah, Behold your God!

There is some neat compounding here, as we even read in the last verse that Christ *ascended* into the mountain and summoned “those whom He Himself had desired” - the apostles having *ascended* with Him either the night before or in the morning.

But perhaps the allegory goes even deeper than this. Paul of Tarsus understood that the twelve tribes are the household of Yahweh, and that this building was being built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets through the proclamation of the Gospel, in which the dispersed people of Yahweh were being reconciled as one holy temple, writing to the Ephesians that the household is “being built upon the foundation of the ambassadors and the prophets, Yahshua Christ being the cornerstone Himself. In whom the whole building joined together grows into a holy [*sanctified - which includes separation from the bastard races*] temple with the Prince, in which you also are being built together into an abode of Yahweh in Spirit.”<sup>62</sup> The household of Yahweh (*the children of Israel*) is also the city of Yahweh (*the children of Israel*), and therefore the words of Paul of Tarsus agree with the Revelation of the Christ where we read concerning the city of Heavenly Jerusalem “And the wall of the city has twelve

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<sup>60</sup> Genesis 35:11

<sup>61</sup> Matthew 28:19

<sup>62</sup> Ephesians 2:20-22

foundations, and upon them the twelve names of the twelve ambassadors of the Lamb.”<sup>63</sup> And so if the apostles in their proportion assisted in the growing of the household of Israel into a holy temple through their proclamation of the Gospel, then their ascending into the mountain where they were appointed by Christ to proclaim that Gospel emanates the prophetic words of Yahweh through His prophet Haggai, where He said “Go up to the mountain, and bring wood, and build the house; and I will take pleasure in it, and I will be glorified, saith the LORD.”<sup>64</sup>

While Yahweh at that time was speaking of the Second Temple which the 40,000 from Babylonian captivity had returned to build - perhaps His words have another more transcendental fulfillment in the temple of His people. There in Haggai, Yahweh says He *takes pleasure* in His house, and just as the apostles are the men whom Yahshua “desired” here in Mark, the tribes of Israel are His holy temple whom He *desires to dwell with*. As we read in the 68<sup>th</sup> Psalm, “Why leap ye, ye high hills? this is the hill which God desireth to dwell in; yea, the LORD will dwell in it for ever.”<sup>65</sup>

*Continuing with Mark:*

### **3:15 and to have authority to cast out demons.**

*The clause “and to heal diseases” is not present in the 4<sup>th</sup> century codices Vaticanus and Sinaiticus. It might have been an interpolation meant to harmonize with Matthew 10:1.*

Mark has thus far in two accounts referred to demons as *unclean spirits* (1:23-27, 3:11) and then in two other accounts as *demons* (1:34, 39). These are certainly synonyms, and Mark will use them interchangeably later on in his gospel<sup>66</sup>. The word *demon* is a Greek word (δαίμόνιον #1140) which generally refers to a spirit being inferior to God. It is not the same as *devil* - which is really an adjective describing an accuser (implicitly a false accuser) that acts as a noun. The fact that the King James sometimes translates *demons* as *devils* is certainly the cause of much confusion.

When you take the brevity of Mark’s gospel into account, demons or unclean spirits are brought up more than any other. It was an incredible thing for people to witness these exorcisms; and that is certainly what they had witnessed. Christ was no fool mistaking mental illnesses for demonic possession; in fact many mental illnesses are likely the result of demonic possession! A belief in malevolent spiritual entities was held by all the earliest branches of our Adamic race. The many accounts of Yahshua’s sovereignty over His enemies are a testament to how He will triumph over them at the end of the age.

While Mark mentions only that the apostles were given the authority to cast out demons in this passage, Matthew noted how they were also given authority “to heal every disease and every weakness.”<sup>67</sup> As we discussed in our previous commentary, Yahshua was *casting out demons* and *healing* the afflicted among the great concourse of people before ascending the Galilean mountain, and His works there were certainly foreshadowing how He was about to bestow similar authorities upon His apostles.

The ability to cast out demons certainly requires authority on the part of God, for apart from Him man is not able to do anything. As Paul wrote in part, “there is no authority except from Yahweh”,<sup>68</sup> which was something understood among the pious, and so Matthew writes that after Yahshua displayed His authority to remit errors upon the earth by healing the paralytic in Capernaum “Then seeing it the crowds feared and honored Yahweh for giving such authority to men.”<sup>69</sup> Yahshua remitted the errors of the paralytic because He is the lawgiving God, and here He is recorded as having given the apostles authority to cast out demons, which is again because He is God.<sup>70</sup> (Despite being God, coming to earth as a perfect Son, Yahshua always credited the Father for His deeds, as an example to men.)

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<sup>63</sup> Revelation 21:14

<sup>64</sup> Haggai 1:8

<sup>65</sup> Psalm 68:12

<sup>66</sup> Mark 5:13-15, 6:7, 13

<sup>67</sup> Matthew 10:1 [...]

<sup>68</sup> Romans 13:1 [...]

<sup>69</sup> Matthew 9:8

<sup>70</sup> Mark 2:5-12

How could a man ever have authority over the unknown realm of unclean spirits without the help of Yahweh God Almighty? An excellent example of how vain efforts are without God's favor is found in the book of Acts, where Luke writes of seven vagabond sons of a bastard high priest attempting to cast out demons with cheap imitation and zero authority:

**Acts 19:11-16** And Yahweh brought about extraordinary feats of power through the hands of Paul, so that even for handkerchiefs or sashes to be brought from his flesh to those who were sick and to be relieved from their diseases, and the wicked spirits made to depart. Then certain of the vagabond [*cf. Gen 4:12*] Judaeen exorcists also attempted to call the Name of Prince Yahshua upon those having wicked spirits, saying "I adjure you by Yahshua whom Paul proclaims!" And there were seven sons of a certain Judaeen high priest Skeua doing this. But the wicked spirit answered: it said to them "Now I know Yahshua, and I am acquainted with Paul, but who are you?" Then the man in whom was the wicked spirit springing upon them overpowering both prevailing against them and so naked and having been wounded to flee from that house.

Paul was given authority by Yahweh God to perform signs and cast out demons, but these sons of Skeva had no such authority given to them, and they were demons themselves anyways since their father was certainly a bastard. The wicked spirit knew Yahshua, and was acquainted with Paul, but had no idea who the sons of Skeva were.

There are witnesses of the apostles having cast out demons from this time forward in Christ's ministry, such as where we read later in Mark "and they cast out many demons, and anointed with olive oil and healed many sick."<sup>71</sup> It is evident that the ability of the apostles to cast out demons would eventually become known among at least some of the people, where the father with the possessed epileptic son said "and I spoke to Your students in order that they would cast it out, and they were not able."<sup>72</sup> The students were not able to cast out that particular demon not because of any lack of authority imparted to them, for Luke writes that the apostles were given "power and authority over all demons". Christ explicitly told the apostles that they were unable "for reason of your little faith!"<sup>73</sup>

Now what Luke meant where he wrote that the apostles were given "power and authority over all demons" is elaborated upon later in his gospel, where the seventy-two students who were given similar authority returned to Christ rejoicing with great joy:

**Luke 10:17-20** Then the seventy-two returned with great joy saying: "Prince, even the demons are subjected to us by Your Name!" And He said to them "I beheld the Adversary falling as lightning from heaven! Behold! I have given to you authority to tread upon serpents and scorpions, and upon all the power of the enemy, and no one shall by any means do you injustice. But in this you must not rejoice: that spirits are subject to you. Rather, rejoice that your names are inscribed in the heavens."

When Christ told the students that He had given them "authority to tread upon serpents and scorpions", He was not referring to random animals but to so-called people, the bastard descendants of those fallen angels whom He observed fall "as lightning from heaven!". The Revelation describes the fallen angels who were cast out of heaven as "that serpent of old", revealing that it was a fallen angel or descendant thereof who seduced Eve in the allegorical account of Genesis 2-3, and Cain was the seed of that serpent, which is why the Edomite descendants of Cain in Judaea were called the "offspring of vipers" by Christ.<sup>74</sup> As for scorpions, this is a racial designation as well since Christ used it to refer to the Muslim hordes sent to punish Byzantium in His Revelation (the symbolism of serpents is also used there); and the pejorative of scorpions has precedence in Scripture (see Eze 2:6).<sup>75</sup> There is no doubt then that Christ was speaking of the bastard races when He told the students that He had given them "authority to tread upon serpents and scorpions" Because the bastard races are beasts,<sup>76</sup> perhaps this authority was a renewal or strengthening of the blessing imparted on the descendants of Noah, where Yahweh said: "And the fear of you and the dread of you shall be upon every beast of the earth, and

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<sup>71</sup> Mark 6:13

<sup>72</sup> Mark 9:18 [...]

<sup>73</sup> Luke 9:1 [...], Matthew 17:20 [...]

<sup>74</sup> Matthew 12:34, 23:33

<sup>75</sup> Revelation 9:3, 10

<sup>76</sup> 2 Peter 2:12, Jude 1:19

upon every fowl of the air, upon all that moveth upon the earth, and upon all the fishes of the sea; into your hand are they delivered.”<sup>77</sup>

Yahshua speaking of the bastard race serpents and scorpions told the students to not rejoice that “[spirits are subject to you](#)” - which accords with the words of the apostle John who conveys that the bastard races are embodied demons where he describes them as “[spirits](#)”:

**1 John 4:1-3** Beloved, do not have trust in every spirit, but scrutinize whether the spirits are from of Yahweh, because many false prophets have gone out into Society. By this you know the Spirit of Yahweh: each spirit which professes that Yahshua Christ has come in the flesh is from of Yahweh, and each spirit which does not profess Yahshua is not from of Yahweh, and this is the Antichrist, whom you have heard that it comes, and is already now in Society.

One of the primary themes of John’s first surviving epistle is that the Gospel divides the wheat from the tares; that a family tree is known by its fruits; and that in looking carefully at the works of a man you can often discern if he is an Adamic Spirit or a bastard unclean spirit. If a spirit is “[not from of Yahweh](#)” as John says, then it absolutely must be a demon - and therefore John informs us that the bastard races are embodied demons! Again, Christ conveys the same message, where He associates the treading of serpents and scorpions with the subjection of “[spirits](#)”. Of course, John learned these things through the words of Christ!

And so the gospel of Luke adds depth to the words of Mark and informs us that the apostles had authority over “[all](#)” demons both embodied and disembodied. Where Yahshua said in Luke that “[But in this you must not rejoice: that spirits are subject to you. Rather, rejoice that your names are inscribed in the heavens.](#)” - He was essentially saying to not rejoice that demons are subject to you but rather rejoice that you are not a demon yourself! This is one of the pre-eminent “rejoice that you are White” verses in the Bible.

In fact, having your names inscribed in the heavens was something Paul connected with having the birthright (which Jacob inherited and passed onto his sons) in a passage we quoted earlier in this commentary, where he wrote to the Hebrews:

**Hebrews 12:22-24** But you have approached Mount Sion and the city of Yahweh who lives, Jerusalem in the heavens, and to myriads of messengers, to a general gathering and to an assembly of those of the birthright being registered in the heavens, and to Yahweh judge of all, and to the Spirits of those righteous having been perfected; and to a mediator of a new covenant of Yahshua, and to the blood of sprinkling, speaking better than Abel.

To have your names “[inscribed in the heavens](#)” is to have “[the birthright](#)” passed on from Abraham to Isaac and then to Jacob and his offspring, and that birthright cannot be stolen for as Paul said “[even a validated covenant of man no one sets aside, or makes additions to for himself.](#)”<sup>78</sup> Therefore, to have your names inscribed in the heavens is also to be of “[Jerusalem in the heavens](#)”, which is the woman of Israel herself, “[who is our mother](#)”.<sup>79</sup> It is to be a part of the city of God which is not a place but the people of Israel themselves, for as Christ said “[The Kingdom of Yahweh does not come along with observation. Nor shall they say 'Behold, it is here!' or 'it is there!' For behold! The Kingdom of Yahweh is among you!](#)”<sup>80</sup> It is for reason that the Kingdom is a people and not a place that the twelve gates of the holy city Jerusalem in the Revelation are depicted as being inscribed with the names of the twelve tribes of Israel - because you enter in through the gates when you are born of one of those tribes.<sup>81</sup> This is why the city is married to God - a nation is married to God and not a city - and Yahweh has promised to only marry Israel.<sup>82</sup> For anyone who dares espouse “universalism” heresy, they should know that He can *only* marry Israel, for “[Anyone who divorces his wife and marries another commits adultery](#)”<sup>83</sup>

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<sup>77</sup> Genesis 9:2

<sup>78</sup> Galatians 3:15 [...]

<sup>79</sup> Galatians 4:26 [...] (cf. Hosea 2:2, Isaiah 50:1, Ezekiel 23:2, et al)

<sup>80</sup> Luke 17:20-21 [...]

<sup>81</sup> Revelation 21:12

<sup>82</sup> Hosea 2:14-23, Isaiah 49:14-18, Jeremiah 31:1-4, et al

<sup>83</sup> Luke 16:18 [...]

The apostles (*we are not counting Judas*) who were given authority to cast out demons are bricks and living stones of the Kingdom of God because they are Israelites, and therefore, whenever they had cast out demons, the Kingdom of Yahweh was literally overtaking the house of Satan! This could remind us then of where Christ says to His opponents in the gospel of Luke: “[But if by the finger of Yahweh I cast out demons, then the Kingdom of Yahweh has overtaken you!](#)”<sup>84</sup>

*Thank you for reading, and praise Yahweh the God of Israel.*

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<sup>84</sup> Luke 11:20