

# 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 15: Sons of Thunder

When Cornelius fell at Peter's feet, the apostle lifted him up, saying, "[Stand up! I myself also am a man!](#)"<sup>1</sup> Being a Roman, the actions of Cornelius in that instance can be interpreted as a type foreshadowing the shameful conduct of the later Roman so-called "Catholic" Church, which seeking to lord over men would go on to falsely claim that Peter was the first so-called "pope". The difference between Cornelius and the Catholic Church, is that Cornelius actually got up from off the floor.

For three weeks now so-called "catholics" have been licking the feet of their newest so-called "pope", who has brandished himself with the name "Leo". Having negro blood, it would have been more appropriate if he called himself "dog". The apostle Peter would agree (2 Peter 2:22).

The epithet "Petros", which means *stone*, never inferred that Simon was to become some sort of "pope". Such facts might bristle some: but we should not be afraid to cause offense when thundering the truth of Scripture. We should strive to be as the sons of Zebedee, whom Christ labeled with the epithet *Boanerges*, which is *sons of thunder*. We could imagine that the label had to do with their zeal for Yahweh and His law, which is often utterly lacking among the churches who shrink away from offending who commit wrongdoing. But Yahweh chose the *sons of thunder*, not the *sons of compromise*.

And so, there are two epithets which we will explore in this commentary on Mark: *Petros* (stone) and *Boanerges* (sons of thunder), and we will also discuss the lives of Simon Peter and the sons of Zebedee in detail. Perhaps we could have entitled this presentation, "a tale of two epithets", but apart from being cliché, it would have also taken away from the buildup of the previous three "sons" installments.

The epithet *Boanerges*, sons of thunder, is actually unique to Mark's gospel and for that reason will receive much of our focus here. Something which is quite incredible, is that the epithet can be interpreted as prophetic in how it compounds with the meaning of the names and lives of the men upon which it was placed, in order to paint a picture of the war of the Wedding Supper of the Lamb. I was not expecting the threads to go as far as they did, and they almost certainly go even further. Praise Yahweh our God! Scripture never ceases to amaze.

### 3:16 And He made these the twelve: Simon whom He also labeled with the name "Petros",

*The first clause "and He made these the twelve" is omitted by some later manuscripts, but this omission is likely due to a scribal copying error. Specifically, it may be the result of haplography (accidentally skipping over text) and homoioarcton (when two phrases start similarly, leading a scribe's eye to jump from one to the other). This is plausible here, since the phrase Καὶ ἐποίησεν ("and He made") appears earlier (3:14), which could have caused confusion during copying. I am not aware of any valid reason to doubt the authenticity of this clause. In fact, its repetitive structure fits well with the oral and rhythmic style of Mark's gospel.*

This is Simon Peter, the source of the oral accounts methodically written down in this gospel by his friend and transcriber John Mark, whom he affectionately called "[my son](#)" at the closing of his first surviving epistle. There are two surviving epistles of Peter, which brings the total of New Testament books authored by him to three, two directly and one indirectly.

Now, we have already discussed in the previous commentary why we believe Simon Peter is mentioned first in all three lists of the apostles (four if we include Acts). He is certainly the most prominent apostle in the New Testament, being mentioned over 150 times, which is much more than

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<sup>1</sup> Acts 10:26 [...]

John the son of Zebedee, being mentioned around 47 times. This results in us being more familiar with Peter than any other apostle, to the extent that it sometimes might even feel like we know him personally. It is hard to forget some of the key moments in the Gospel where he has a role to play, such as when he fearfully walked on the water towards Christ, candidly confessed Yahshua to be the Messiah, sought to make three tents for Christ, Moses, and Elijah during the Transfiguration on the Mount, or even when he denied Christ three times, being then forgiven three times on the shore of the Sea of Galilee. In Acts, Peter arranged the selection of Judas' replacement, strengthened and encouraged his brethren at the first Christian Pentecost, performed many miracles in Yahshua's name including the resurrection of Dorcas, received the vision of the sheet explaining to him the cleansing of dispersed Israel and followed on to witness the Holy Spirit pouring out on members of one of those dispersed nations at Cornelius' household; Peter was also delivered from prison through the hand of a messenger of Yahweh.

There are other accounts of Simon Peter, but these are perhaps the most memorable.

This is less pragmatic, but I believe Peter's major role in the Gospel narratives was able to provide a literary device which the other apostles might not have been as suitably equipped to typify. The stubborn and impetuous nature of Peter is often a worthy insert for the reader, an example of our shortcomings as the stiff-necked children of Israel, and the apostle's journey can therefore represent the mercy which we have all long received in Christ, and the transformation we can uniformly achieve by conforming ourselves to His image.

In our previous commentary we discussed how we know much less about the remaining apostles of the original twelve in comparison to the three who were reputed as pillars. This is because only Scripture can be accounted as an entirely trustworthy biography for these men, an approach which escapes all fallibility and for that reason is ideal. The foggy traditions concerning the twelve rarely ever receive any corresponding Biblical substance that can be used to verify them, and therefore, while certain legends may have grains of historic truth within them, those smaller pieces cannot be discerned apart from the greater embellishments; similarly, while other legends may even be entirely truthful, without the foundation of Scripture the entirely truthful stories can easily be conflated with those which are entirely false. The most safe passage to embark on is to be skeptical at best and dismissive at worst of anything without Scriptural testimony, and so while we will cite a peculiar tradition concerning John the son of Zebedee later in this commentary, the farthest extent of the citation's purpose is curiosity.

Returning to Simon Peter and beginning our discussion on his life, we should take note of what Scripture informs us concerning his immediate relations. The apostle was part of an apostolic brotherly pair, much like the sons of Zebedee and the brothers of Christ, and we learn from the gospel of John that Peter's brother Andrew had actually followed Yahshua before him, perhaps a few hours ahead, where we read: "[He \[Andrew\] finds his own older brother Simon and says to him 'We have found the Messiah!'](#)"<sup>2</sup> That passage also explicitly informs us that Andrew was the younger brother, but the seniority of Peter was already implied in the other gospels wherever he is mentioned first, or whenever Andrew is described as "the brother of Peter".<sup>3</sup>

The name of Simon Peter's father is mentioned in two out of the four gospels, and there might appear to be a discrepancy between the two witnesses. In the gospel of Matthew, Yahshua is recorded as having called Simon the "[son of Jonah](#)," whereas in the oldest surviving manuscripts of the Gospel of John, He is recorded as having called him the "[son of John](#)."<sup>4</sup> Many manuscripts of the latter gospel follow an amending of *John* to *Jonah*, which betrays an apparent assumption on the part of the scribes that Matthew's gospel represented an accurate preservation of the name and that an early scribal error had entered the Johannine manuscripts. I would not jump to that same assumption, however, as the witnesses of the earliest surviving manuscripts should still be respected given our lack of clarifying knowledge. Firstly, it is a simple fact that men often had more than one name, as we will see several times as we continue with our reckoning of the twelve. Secondly, Yahshua may have called Simon *the son of Jonah*, given that Peter was the most stubborn of the apostles and Jonah the most stubborn of the prophets. On the chance that the variation between the gospels of Matthew and John does indeed

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<sup>2</sup> John 1:41 [...]

<sup>3</sup> Mark 1:16, John 6:8, et al

<sup>4</sup> John 1:42, 21:15-17

represent a scribal error, then it would ostensibly be on account of the fact that the names Ἰωνᾶς (Jonah) and Ἰωάννης (John) are quite similar in Greek.

**Jonah** is a Hebrew word meaning *dove* (#H3124), and is the name of the famous prophet who was swallowed up by the whale. **Iohannes** is a Hellenization of the Hebrew name Iohanan (#H3110), and means *Yahweh is gracious*.

Names are important, and if we would like to make an attempt of compounding these two names together, then perhaps we could say this: Simon Peter was the first apostle to enter the empty tomb of the Christ who came out of the belly of the earth after three days, just as **Jonah** came out from the belly of the whale after three days; the Resurrection representing the accomplishment of salvation for the seed of Israel on account of the **favor** (grace) shown onto Abraham. Peter would go on to publish of that **favor** (grace) which Yahweh has for the tribes of Israel, writing in the closing of his first surviving epistle that he was “**testifying for this to be the true favor of Yahweh in which you should stand.**”<sup>5</sup> Another interpretation, is the witness of how Yahweh is gracious to even the most stubborn of us, and is merciful with us all.

One last thing concerning Peter’s immediate family: we know that Peter had a wife as early as the ministry of Christ, which is evident in the synoptic accounts of his mother-in-law being healed. We discussed that pericope in our commentary, *Plastering the Bruises*. Catholic apologists try to argue that his wife might have died, but moving forward in his life, Peter was still married roughly 26 years later when Paul wrote his first surviving epistle to the Corinthians around 56 AD, and he remained married even 7 years after that, mentioning the “**elect woman**” in the farewell of his first surviving epistle, which he ostensibly dictated through Silas sometime after Paul’s death in 63 AD.

The fact that Peter was married strikes fear into the hearts of many of the Catholics who worship him, whom Paul warned through the Spirit would “**forbid men to marry.**”<sup>6</sup> But even the other apostles would come to have wives as well, as Paul mentioned that even the other ambassadors had wives in that same epistle which we cited in regards to Peter.<sup>7</sup> Some of the apostles, like Peter, might have already been married during the ministry of Christ, but there is no way to know. The fact that we *do* know that Peter was already married does lend to him being the oldest of the twelve, something which I believe is occasionally hinted at in the Gospel, such as where at his final earthly Passover with Yahshua, Peter was told, “**when you have turned about, you must strengthen your brethren.**”<sup>8</sup> and also perhaps in the fact that he lagged behind the young John when running with him to the empty tomb.<sup>9</sup> In fact, John was the youngest of the apostles, and we can notice how he is recorded as being with Andrew at the time of Yahshua’s immersion but not with Peter, perhaps indicating that Andrew and John were close in age but that Simon was not. Some of the apostles were youths during the ministry of Christ, and if Peter was the eldest among them, then it would explain his leading role in the opening chapters of Acts.

Again, names are important. The name *Simon* was extremely common during the time of Christ, which is evident in contemporary inscriptions and documents, and it is no surprise then that the name is shared by at least seven other men in the New Testament.<sup>10</sup> The name Simon (Σίμων) is a Hellenized version of the Hebrew name *Simeon*, which being the name of one of the patriarchs of Israel makes its popularity in the 1<sup>st</sup> century understandable.

The name Simon/Simeon means *hearing* (#H8085), which could be seen as ironic given the most likely reason for why Yahshua labeled him with the name *Kephas* / *Petros*, which are Hebrew and Greek words meaning *stone*. (#H3710, John 1:42 - #G4074)

As we have already noted, we know much more about Peter than we do concerning the rest of the original twelve, and the plethora of witnesses revealing his personality make it reasonable to conclude that Yahshua gave him the name *Petros* in reference to his stubbornness, and even today we still use

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<sup>5</sup> 1 Peter 5:12

<sup>6</sup> 1 Timothy 4:3

<sup>7</sup> 1 Corinthians 9:5

<sup>8</sup> Luke 22:32 [...]

<sup>9</sup> John 20:4

<sup>10</sup> Simon the Kananee, Simon the Pharisee, Simon of Cyrene, Simon the Tanner, Simon the Leper, Simon the Magician, Simon the father of Judas Iscariot, Simon the brother of Christ, Simeon (Luke 2:25)

the expression “stubborn as a rock.” Being labeled with that name, Simon becomes a type for all of the children of Israel, and an exemplary figure of the mercy which we have all received, for it is written that our ancestors were stiff-necked, and in the prophet Zechariah that “[Yea, they made their hearts as an adamant stone](#)”.<sup>11</sup> Ezekiel, in a more positive sense, was made determined and uncompromising towards the rebellious house of Israel, with his thoughts fixed firmly on God, and so Yahweh told him “[As an adamant harder than flint have I made thy forehead](#)”<sup>12</sup> So we can see in the negative example of Zechariah and in the positive example of Ezekiel, that the metaphor of being *stubborn as a rock* certainly had a precedent in Hebrew writings, and the apostles had likely quickly caught on to Yahshua’s intention, especially Andrew, who would have known the personality of his brother quite well.

There is a plethora of accounts which provide examples of Peter’s stubbornness: such as how he often had to suffer or be told something three times before it sank in, and for that reason even in the Book of Acts he was shown the vision of the sheet three times before coming to understand its meaning. Peter’s stubborn nature can also be seen in some of his attitudes and remarks, such as how he did not want Yahshua to wash his feet, exclaiming “[You may not wash my feet forever!](#)”,<sup>13</sup> having immediately retracted that impetuous statement as soon as Yahshua warned him of its consequences. This demonstrates how Peter was an impetuous man, and that his passion was rightly fueled by his love for Christ, and so it was Peter who volunteered to walk out to Yahshua on the water, and later when the Prince spoke of His imminent death, it was Peter who took Him aside and exclaimed “[Mercy to You, Prince! This shall not be for You!](#)”.<sup>14</sup> Peter was harshly rebuked for that statement also, being called *Adversary* by Christ, because what Peter said was in opposition (adversarial) against the law and the prophets, even if the statement was motivated by love. The apostle would again act in opposition to the law and the prophets when the cohort came to arrest Yahshua in the garden, and he cut off the ear of Malchus, even though the writings demanded that Yahshua’s arrest and sacrifice happen. And so Peter was as impetuous as he was stubborn, and his impetuous nature was often driven by his passionate love for Christ, which is good, but it was at times misused.

As we mentioned earlier, with Simon being stubborn in as far as being labeled *Petros* by Christ, then perhaps the name of his father being *Jonah* was prophetic of Simon’s character. It would not be a stretch to imagine that Simon’s father was as stubborn as he was, because as the Bible teaches us, the apple does not fall very far from the tree!<sup>15</sup> Judging by what we know in the writings given to us, Jonah appears to have been the most stubborn of the prophets, which is evident in how he attempted to flee from Yahweh’s command, and also in his attitude concerning the gourd, when he answered Yahweh’s question, “[do you well to be angry for the gourd?](#)” with, “[I do well to be angry, even unto death.](#)”<sup>16</sup>

While Peter, like all of us, had faults, he was also a very humble man, telling Yahshua after witnessing the miracle of the net at the Sea of Galilee, “[Depart from me, because I am a sinful man, O Prince!](#)”<sup>17</sup> That detail is unique to Luke, and it has a beautiful juxtaposition with the end of John’s gospel, where Peter witnesses the same miracle of the net in the same lake around two years later, after Yahshua’s resurrection, and instead of saying “[Depart from me](#)”, he excitedly girds himself and leaps into the water to swim towards Yahshua on the beach.

**Luke 5:6-8** And doing this they enclosed a great multitude of fish, even bursting through their nets. Then they signaled to the partners in the other vessel that they come to assist them, and coming then they filled both the vessels so as to sink them. And seeing it, Simon Petros fell to the knees of Yahshua saying "Depart from me, because I am a sinful man, O Prince!"

**John 21:6-7** Then He said to them: "Cast the net to the right side of the vessel, and you shall find." Therefore they cast, and no longer were they able to draw it because of the multitude of fish. Then that student whom Yahshua loved says to Petros: "It is the Prince!" So Simon Petros hearing that it is the

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<sup>11</sup> Zechariah 7:12 [...]

<sup>12</sup> Ezekiel 3:9 [...]

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

<sup>14</sup> Matthew 16:22

<sup>15</sup> John 8:39

<sup>16</sup> Jonah 4:9

<sup>17</sup> Luke 5:8 [...]

Prince girt himself with the frock, for he was naked, [men often worked naked so as to not unnecessarily dirty their clothing - see Mark 13:16] and cast himself into the sea,

Returning to the gospel of Mark, we can see how Mark mentions the fact that his friend Simon was labeled with the name *Petros* by Christ, but never mentions when or where, and neither do Matthew or Luke in their gospels.

We might have assumed that the label was placed upon Simon during the appointing of the twelve on the mountain, if it were not for the fact that John tells us that Simon was labeled with the name upon first meeting Yahshua, one mere day after the Prince's immersion in the river Jordan.

**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. 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 Kephas" (which is interpreted "a stone").

Being God and having known Simon before he was born and even before He created the heavens and the earth, when Yahshua "met" Simon in the earthly sense, we can see that He immediately gave Simon a name that foreshadowed many of the events of the three and a half year journey that the future apostle was now stepping into.

In addition to the plethora of witnesses testifying to Peter's character, our interpretation of the meaning behind the label *Petros* / *Kephas* is further supported by the very next verse here in Mark, where Yahshua is uniquely recorded as having labeled the sons of Zebedee with the name *Boanerges*, which is "sons of thunder," ostensibly because of the fiery zeal of these brothers which is seen later in the gospel accounts. The labels *Petros* (rock) and *Boanerges* (sons of thunder) being contextually observed side by side in the gospel of Mark, and with scriptural witnesses which perfectly match the personalities implied by each, our contention that the label of *Petros* was an epithet descriptive of character and not a label in regards to destiny is further substantiated. (We will address the Roman-Catholic heresy shortly.)

A keen eye might notice how the label *Boanerges* put upon the sons of Zebedee is Aramaic, while the label *Petros* is Greek, but this does not mean that Christ had given an Aramaic label to the sons of Zebedee and a Greek one to Peter. As we saw earlier from the gospel of John (1:42), Christ had actually labeled Simon with the Hebrew equivalent to the word *petros*, which is *kephas*, and therefore the synoptic gospels simply provide the Greek translation.

Paul called Simon by the name *Kephas* in his epistles,<sup>18</sup> and Peter wrote warmly of Paul near the closing of his second surviving epistle, writing "And regard the forbearing salvation of our Prince, just as also our beloved brother Paul according to the wisdom given to him has written to you."<sup>19</sup> Peter acknowledged the legitimacy of Paul's apostleship, and we see the friendship between the two men witnessed in their epistles. We know from Paul's epistle to the Galatians that Peter was actually the first apostle whom Paul met, when he introduced himself in Jerusalem three years after his conversion on the road to Damascus, and he abode with Peter for fifteen days.<sup>20</sup>

### Addressing the Roman "Catholic" Heresies

This would have ideally been a good moment to progress forward into the next verse, but the heresy surrounding the label *Petros* should probably be addressed, given that this is the most opportune moment in the gospel of Mark for us to do so.

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<sup>18</sup> John 1:42, 1 Corinthians 1:12, 3:22, 9:5, 15:5, Galatians 2:9-14

<sup>19</sup> 2 Peter 3:15

<sup>20</sup> Galatians 1:18-19



Many would try to argue that the label of *Peter* signified how Simon was being elevated to some sort of so-called “pope” for some sort of so-called “church”, which is a ridiculous assertion, as if the children of Israel could ever require a substitute for the living Christ, and as if the *ekklesia* (church) was ever some sort of religious council instead of the racial body which Scripture defines it as.

The *ekklesia* is the body, as Paul wrote:

**Ephesians 1:22-23** And all things He placed under His feet, and has given Him a crown over all things in the assembly, which is His body, the fulfillment of that which all things in all are being fulfilled.

And the *body* is the saints, as Paul also wrote:

**Ephesians 4:11-12** And He has given the ambassadors, and the interpreters of prophesy, and those who deliver the good message, and the shepherds - teachers, towards the restoration of the saints, for the work of ministering for building of the body of the Anointed,

The *saints*, as defined in Scripture, are those who are sanctified by God, and only the children of Israel were ever sanctified to Him. They were first sanctified to Yahweh God when Abraham dedicated Isaac to Yahweh on the altar, while the children of Israel were still in the young man Isaac’s loins. As Christ said, “For what is greater, the gift or the altar which sanctifies the gift?”<sup>21</sup> The children of Israel were sanctified a second time to Yahweh their God when they were married to Him at Sinai.<sup>22</sup> Therefore, it is only ever the children of Israel who are called *saints* in the Scriptures, for as it is written concerning the giving of the law to Israel, “and he came with ten thousands of saints: from his right hand went a fiery law for them.”<sup>23</sup> and as the psalmist Asaph wrote concerning the destruction of Jerusalem in 586 BC, “The dead bodies of thy servants have they given to be meat unto the fowls of the heaven, the flesh of thy saints unto the beasts of the earth.”<sup>24</sup> Therefore, Paul wrote that Yahweh has an inheritance with the saints (Eph 1:18), because the children of Israel are the lot of His inheritance (Deu 32:9). Paul also wrote that the saints are called (Eph 1:18), because the children of Israel are the called of Yahweh (Isa 48:12).

The Scriptures teach us that the assembly is the body, and that the body is the saints, and that the saints are the children of Israel. Therefore, the church is a racial body and not a political or religious one. Christianity is a racial covenant which you are born under, not a religious organization you can decide to ‘join’. Any church which defines itself as anything but the flesh and blood descendants of Abraham through Isaac and Jacob establishes itself in opposition against God’s Word. Anyone who thinks that the Roman-Catholic church is a legitimate entity, does not know what the church (*ekklesia*) is.

If Yahweh ordained the papacy as legitimate, then He is the author of both evil and failure - but Yahweh is certainly not the author of such things. Yahshua Christ never ordained any organized religious church or papacy. Period.

Interestingly enough, it is the very words that the Roman Catholics deliberately misinterpreted which silences their heresies:

**Matthew 16:18** And I say to you that you are a stone [petros], yet upon this bedrock [petra] shall I build My assembly and the gates of Hades shall not prevail against it!

The Greek of this passage is very simple, but was ignored by the Roman Catholic church so that they could attempt to rule over men.

We can see from Matthew how Christ acknowledged that Simon is a stone, a mere *petros*, one mere part of the larger assembly of saints, and this was something Peter himself later understood and acknowledged in his first surviving epistle, writing that the sojourners of Israel were “*living stones*”, the precious stones of the Revelation of which the Kingdom of God is made up of: that Kingdom being

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<sup>21</sup> Matthew 23:19 [...]

<sup>22</sup> Exodus 19:10

<sup>23</sup> Deuteronomy 33:2 [...]

<sup>24</sup> Psalm 79:2

defined in Scripture as the children of Israel.<sup>25</sup> Therefore, David wrote concerning Israel's future restoration in the 144<sup>th</sup> Psalm, that being accomplished "our daughters may be as corner stones, polished after the similitude of a palace"<sup>26</sup>

But the Greek is simple. Christ did not say that He would build His assembly upon Simon, *petros*, but rather made a distinction, saying that the assembly would be built upon the much greater rock, the *petra*, which can be defined in this context as the bedrock of the entire earth, for it is written that the children of Israel will "blossom and bud, and fill the face of the world with fruit."<sup>27</sup> However, the bedrock must more significantly represent Christ Himself (Mat 7:24-25), who was a rock of offense upon which His enemies stumbled, but a chief cornerstone upon which His people were established (1 Pet 2:7-8).

Christ said "upon this bedrock [petra] shall I build My assembly and the gates of Hades shall not prevail against it!" - because the sacrifice of Christ justifying the entirety of the seed of Israel without any exceptions (Isa 45:25) ensured that Hades would never prevail against it. The way Christ worded His statement recorded in Matthew makes it a direct allusion to a prophecy found in what is now the 28<sup>th</sup> chapter of Isaiah:

**Isaiah 28:16-18** Therefore thus saith the Lord GOD, **Behold, I lay in Zion [Zion represents the children of Israel, the saints, and thus the assembly] for a foundation a stone [Christ], a tried stone, a precious corner stone, a sure foundation:** he that believeth shall not make haste. Judgment also will I lay to the line, and righteousness to the plummet: and the hail shall sweep away the refuge of lies, and the waters shall overflow the hiding place. And your covenant with death shall be disannulled, **and your agreement with hell shall not stand; [the gates of Hades shall not prevail]** when the overflowing scourge shall pass through, then ye shall be trodden down by it.

The prophetic wordplay between *petros* and *petra* is evident in the gospel of Matthew, and therefore Simon's label should not be transliterated in that account. Otherwise, one would be arguing that the *precious corner stone* and *sure foundation* in Isaiah is Peter and not Christ, which is absurd.

The writings are clear on the fact that Yahweh is the rock of His assembly, which is the children of Israel, for as it is written: "For who is God save the LORD? or who is a rock save our God?" and also "He only is my rock and my salvation"<sup>28</sup> It is a shame that the Catholics would disagree with David. There is no rock apart from God, and the heresies of the Catholics are damned.

We will address one last Catholic heresy and begin to do so by noting how Peter was martyred, something which is certain because the resurrected Prince had foretold this to Peter on the shore of the Sea of Galilee, as it is written in the closing chapter of John's gospel:

**John 21:18-19** Truly, truly I say to you, when you were young, you girt yourself and walked about wherever you wished. But when you should grow old, you shall extend your hand, and another shall gird and bring you where you do not wish." Now He said this indicating with what sort of death he would honor Yahweh. And upon saying this He says to him: "Follow Me."

There are early traditions of Peter having been crucified in Rome, which is even testified by Ignatius,<sup>29</sup> and while they should not be discounted, they cannot be verified either. It is clear that Peter was in Babylon when he penned his first surviving epistle, ostensibly sometime after Paul's execution. Peter anticipated that his own death was imminent at that time, writing shortly later in his second surviving epistle:

**2 Peter 1:13-14** Now I deem it righteous, for as long as I am in this tabernacle, to arouse you by reminder, knowing that soon is the putting aside of my tabernacle, just as also our Prince Yahshua Christ has shown me

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<sup>25</sup> 1 Peter 2:5 [...] | Revelation 21:11, 19

<sup>26</sup> Psalm 144:12 [...]

<sup>27</sup> Isaiah 27:6 [...]

<sup>28</sup> Psalm 18:31, 62:2 [...], 62:6 [...]

<sup>29</sup> Ignatius' epistle to the Tracians

Catholics have long treated “Babylon” as a code word for Rome, and for the sake of consistency, they should interpret Mystery Babylon in Revelation the same way, but being hypocrites they dare not.

Scripture gives no indication that Peter ever set foot in Rome before Paul’s death, and the popular legend that Paul and Peter together founded a singular church in Rome collapses under scrutiny: Paul wrote to several churches in Rome years before he ever traveled there, not to one singular church, and he never mentions Peter in that epistle. Furthermore, those who came to Paul in Rome had apparently never heard Christianity taught directly from an apostle before.<sup>30</sup> Peter being in Rome at that time makes little sense then, while by contrast, his presence in Babylon aligns perfectly with his mission to the circumcised, since many circumcised Israelites still lived in Babylon. Because of this evidence that Peter never set foot in Rome before Paul’s death in 63 AD, and the fact that he was in Babylon after 63 AD - it is strongly suggested in Scripture that Peter never set foot in Rome, and that if he did, it was sometime after he penned those two epistles, shortly before his death, and surely with not enough time to found any singular church in a city where there were already many.

Many of the traditions upheld by the Catholic Church concerning Peter did not emerge until centuries after his death, and for those which are older, the fact that a legend is old still does not make it true. Additionally, interpolations in favor of Catholic tradition are not far-fetched. The editors of “The Ante-Nicene Fathers, Translations of the writings of the Fathers down to A.D. 325” demonstrate that there were indeed some Roman Catholic interpolations in the works of Cyprian supportive of later Catholic doctrine, and these sections can be proven as corruptions when compared against the older manuscripts.

While Peter certainly might have been imprisoned and executed in Rome, something which certain Latinisms in the gospel of Mark could hint towards, whether or not it happened is immaterial and lends no credibility to the so-called “Catholic” Church. We explored some of these matters in our [introduction to Mark](#), since Peter himself is the source of this gospel and it was necessary in our introduction to try to date its composition to the best of our means.

To summarize: the last we hear from Peter in the New Testament is when he is in Babylon, and we do not know with certainty how his life came to end. What we do know is this: that the apostle had nothing to do with the heresies which would later form the foundation of the Catholic Church, an institution which has tried to use Peter’s name to justify their abominations for generations. Men will celebrate that the teachings of the Roman Catholic Church were entirely false and the teachings of Peter entirely correct when the Adamic race abides in the resurrection. Perhaps we were quite *thunderous* and severe with our words concerning the so-called Catholic Church, but all Christians should be, as our Christ severely condemned the institution in His Revelation.

*Speaking of thunder, continuing with Mark:*

**3:17 and Iakobos the son of Zebedaios and Iohannes the brother of Iakobos and He labeled them with the name "Boanerges", which is "Sons of Thunder",**

These two sons of Zebedee were called by the sea of Galilee in the opening chapter of this gospel, where we read “[And going on a little He saw Iakobos the son of Zebedaios and Iohannes his brother and those in the vessel repairing the nets, and right away He called them. And leaving Zebedaios their father in the vessel with the hired hands, they departed after Him.](#)”<sup>31</sup>

As we have said before in this commentary, the calling by the sea of Galilee was not the apostle John’s first encounter with Christ, since we have seen that he along with Andrew and Peter had been following Yahshua from the very beginning; therefore, what we see in Mark 1:19-20 and the other synoptics was only Peter, Andrew, and John’s more “formal” summoning, if we can call it that. The apostles were all students of Yahshua from an early time, but were not set apart and distinguished as apostles until they were appointed on the Galilean mountain, as we discussed in our commentary, [Sons of the Mountain](#). (We cannot determine when John’s brother James (Iakobos) first met the Prince, but being attached to the hip with John throughout the gospel, he likely started following Yahshua soon after his brother.)

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<sup>30</sup> Acts 28:17-28

<sup>31</sup> Mark 1:19-20



Much like Peter, Andrew, and several of the other apostles, James (Iakobos), John, and their father Zebedee, were fishermen, and we learn from Mark's account alone that their family business was successful enough to afford hired workers, where we read "[And leaving Zebedaios their father in the vessel with the hired hands, they departed after Him.](#)"<sup>32</sup>

However, when we step deeper into the gospels, it becomes evident that during the ministry of Christ, *fisherboys* might have been a more accurate description than fishermen for these sons of Zebedee. The apostle John was very young at the time, enough to be able to comfortably lean upon Yahshua's breast during his last earthly Passover with Him, which was only socially acceptable for a youth without facial hair, as according to the day's culture. Therefore, if John was still young enough to lean upon the breast of His Master a whole three and a half years after he began following Yahshua, then it is possible he was around twelve years old at the start, or even younger.

Being a youth would explain why John was close enough to Christ so as to observe intimate and personal conversations which the other gospel writers did not record, as well as the volatile debates which He had with His enemies. We could also conjecture that John's youth would have made him insignificant in the eyes of Yahshua's adversaries, who probably did not regard the boy as any threat, and perhaps the safety of his youth is what allowed him to be the sole apostle to witness the entirety of Yahshua's Passion.

These matters allow us to understand that John was the youngest of the apostles. He may have also lived the longest, because according to early Christian testimony, John was exiled to Patmos in the 90s AD during the reign of the emperor Domitian<sup>33</sup>. After Domitian's death, John was released<sup>34</sup>, and shared the Revelation of Christ which was unveiled to him while on the island. The early Christian writers Irenaeus, and Hippolytus of Rome [allegedly], both testified that John lived into the reign of Trajan, which began in 98 AD.<sup>35</sup> If John was about twelve years old in 28 AD, when Yahshua began His ministry, then he would have been about 82 in 98 AD.

The fact that James was older is strongly implied in the witnesses of his brother's youth, but confirmed in the fact that James is always mentioned first whenever the two brothers are named together, even though John, as one of the three reputed as pillars, was the brother who became the more prominent figure in the New Testament narratives. As we have already seen with Peter and Andrew, there is a consistent pattern in that the older brother is named first, which is a matter of respect with precedence in the Bible. We will see this again later with James and Jude.

That said, I would not imagine that James was *that* much older than his brother John, since these two boys are in the company of their mother later in the Gospel, who makes a request of Yahshua on behalf of her sons. Was James not able to speak for himself? Why is his mother asking for him? And why is he in her company? This situation suggests to me that both of the boys were very young:

**Matthew 20:20-22** [Then the mother of the sons of Zebedaios had come forth to Him with her sons, making obeisance and asking something from Him. And He said to her "What do you wish?" She says to Him: "Say that these my two sons shall sit, one at Your right hand and one at Your left hand in Your kingdom!" Then replying Yahshua said "You know not what you ask! Are you able to drink the cup which I am about to drink?" They say to Him: "We are able!"](#) (There is a Salome uniquely mentioned in the gospel of Mark as one of the women who witnessed the crucifixion of the Christ and who came to the tomb to anoint His body on the third day. It is possible that this Salome, mentioned in Mark 15:40, is the same woman referred to in the parallel account in Matthew 27:56 as the mother of the sons of Zebedee. If so, then Salome would be the mother of James and John. The name Salome is the feminine form of Solomon, and means *peace*.)

This cup which Yahshua was to drink was His death (Mt 26:39, Mk 14:36, Lk 22:42), and to drink from this same cup would therefore entail the precious death of a saint, a child of Israel, a sweet fragrance of life onto life. As it is written in the 116<sup>th</sup> Psalm which prophesied of this very cup which Christ drank, "[Precious in the sight of the LORD is the death of his saints.](#)"<sup>36</sup>

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<sup>32</sup> Mark 1:20 [...]

<sup>33</sup> Against Heresies 5.30.3, Eusebius' Ecclesiastical History 3.18.1-5

<sup>34</sup> Eusebius' Ecclesiastical History 3.20.10-11, 23.1

<sup>35</sup> Irenaeus' Against Heresies 2.22.5, Appendix to the Works of Hippolytus, Dubious and Spurious Pieces, Treatise on the Twelve

<sup>36</sup> Psalm 116:15

If we examine Mark's account, we see that Yahshua would go on to tell the sons of Zebedee that they would indeed drink:

**Mark 10:39** Then they said to Him "We are able!" So Yahshua said to them: "The cup which I drink you shall drink and the immersion which I am immersed in you shall be immersed,

Yahshua's words can simply and literally be interpreted as conveying that both of the sons of Zebedee were eventually martyred, something which cannot be verified for John, but for his brother James it is a certainty, since James is actually the only apostle whose death is recorded in the New Testament. James was the first of the apostles to die for Christ, and he drank the cup c. 41-44 AD (a short nine to twelve years after the Ascension), when he was put to death by the sword under Herod Agrippa I.

There is a tradition that John was not martyred, which likely originated from a misinterpretation of the following passage in his gospel:

**John 21:21-23** Therefore Petros seeing him says to Yahshua: "Prince, but what about this man?" Yahshua says to him: "If I wish him to abide until I come, what is it to you? You follow Me." Therefore this word went out to the brethren, that that student would not die. But Yahshua had not said to him that he would not die, but "If I wish him to abide until I come, what is it to you?"

These words which "went out to the brethren, that that student would not die" could have very possibly been the source of that tradition which says that John was not martyred, but I would rather believe the words of the one Christ over the traditions of men. It appears quite sure that John was martyred, in accordance with a reasonable interpretation of the words of Christ, and his *abiding until Yahshua comes* was quite possibly a reference to how the Prince would eventually appear to John on the island of Patmos, where He unveiled to him His Revelation. The statement could have also been rhetorical.

The book of Acts informs us that James was martyred under Herod Agrippa I, and we do not know anything else about James apart from the fact that he is mentioned in the Gospel when Christ sets apart Peter and the sons of Zebedee to be with Him during three significant moments in His ministry: the raising of Jahirus' daughter, His transfiguration on the Mount, and His agony in the garden.

**Luke 8:51** And coming into the house He did not allow anyone to enter with Him except Petros and Iohannes and Iakobos, and the father and the mother of the child.

**Matthew 17:1** And after six days Yahshua takes Petros and Iakobos and Iohannes his brother and brings them up onto a high mountain by themselves.

**Matthew 26:37** And taking Petros and the two sons of Zebedaios, He began to be grieved and troubled.

And then, even in Mark's account of the Olivet Discourse, we see that it was these three, Peter, James, and John, along with Andrew also, who privately asked Yahshua the questions concerning the fall of Jerusalem and the consummation of the age. This took place just a few days before His Passion, while He was seated on the Mount of Olives.

**Mark 13:3** And upon His being seated in the Mount of Olives opposite the temple they questioned Him by themselves, Petros and Iakobos and Iohannes and Andreas:

This is for the most part the end of our knowledge concerning James. As for John, we know that the apostle is the author of the gospel and three surviving epistles attributed to him, and also that he wrote down the Revelation of the Christ which he had received while on the island of Patmos, ostensibly being exiled on account of the testimony of his gospel which he had already written, for John wrote "I, Iohannes, your brother and fellow-companion in the tribulation and kingdom and endurance in Yahshua, was on the island called Patmos on account of the Word of Yahweh and the testimony of Yahshua."<sup>37</sup>

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<sup>37</sup> Revelation 1:9

In regards to the testimony of his gospel, John humbly sought anonymity when he wrote it, just like the other evangelists, and described himself only as “[the student whom Yahshua loved](#)”<sup>38</sup> John being younger might have described himself this way if he had a father-son relationship with Yahshua which the other apostles did not, but of course, Yahshua loved all of His students, because John himself also wrote “[Now before the feast of Passover, Yahshua knowing that His hour had come when He would cross over from this order to the Father, having loved those of His own who were in the order, to the end He loved them.](#)”<sup>39</sup> John intentionally sought anonymity in his gospel, and had no reason to introduce himself in his epistles, but likely identified himself in the Revelation so as to give a seal of authority on an otherwise surreal and unexpected prophecy, in order that those reading it would understand it was genuinely given by Christ to an apostle, and that they would accept its testimony.

There are several early reports which attest that John kept a residence in Ephesus of Asia Minor<sup>40</sup>, returning there once his exile on Patmos ended with Domitian’s death. These traditions, though they cannot be verified, are believable, as they fit neatly with John having delivered the Revelation to the seven assemblies in Asia, one of which was in Ephesus itself. They are also believable, because of certain substances and subtleties which agree among the witnesses, but discussing them is not necessary for the objectives of our commentary here.

Now Paul had founded the assembly in Ephesus, and he was ostensibly the *first love* which Christ mentioned in His address to that assembly<sup>41</sup>. However, there is no mention of John being in Ephesus during Paul’s three year residence there, nor is there any hint of it when Paul wrote his epistle to the Ephesians years later while imprisoned in Rome. It would seem, then, that John relocated his ministry to Ephesus sometime after Paul’s death (c. 63 AD), perhaps amid the civil unrest preceding Jerusalem’s destruction in AD 70, though this is only conjecture. It appears that John was not in Jerusalem when Paul traveled there with a collected charity for the saints.

Names are important, and we will repeat some of what we wrote concerning the names of these two brothers and their father in our presentation, [Proclaiming the Message](#).

As we have seen in the Christogenea New Testament, the name of James is actually the Hebrew name *Jacob*, or as its Hellenized form is transliterated, *Iakobos*. The half-brother of Christ also has this same name of Jacob, and I prefer to call these apostles by their actual names, instead of by the name *James*, which is French. The name *Jacob* literally means *heel-catcher* or *heel-holder*, and can implicitly refer to a supplanter (see Genesis 27:36).

The name *John* is also Hebrew and means *Yahweh is gracious*. The meaning of the name Zebedee is uncertain, but is usually interpreted to derive from the Hebrew [zebed](#) (#2065) and can thus mean *gift of Yahweh*. If the name Zebedee indeed has this meaning, then it is evident that Zebedee (*gift of Yahweh*), begat John (*Yahweh is gracious*). This compounds with the fact that grace (favor) is a gift of Yahweh, as Paul wrote to the Ephesians “[For in favor you are being preserved through faith \[the promises to Abraham\] and this, Yahweh's gift, is not of yourselves](#)”<sup>42</sup> And so the name of John as it compounds with the name of his father was apparently prophetic of what John would later testify of as an apostle.

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<sup>38</sup> John 13:23, 20:2, 21:7, 20

<sup>39</sup> John 13:1

<sup>40</sup> Irenaeus’ Against Heresies 3.1.1, 3.3.4, Eusebius’ Ecclesiastical History 3.23.1, among others

<sup>41</sup> Revelation 2:4

<sup>42</sup> Ephesians 2:8

Continuing with this verse of Mark, the name *Boanerges* which Christ labeled upon the sons of Zebedee is the special place where Mark's list of the apostles stands out from the rest, and therefore it is the most salient matter to discuss not only from this verse but also in the entirety of Mark's reckoning of the twelve, especially since the name *Boanerges* is not seen anywhere else in the Bible.

Before we dive into this epithet, we must first note that one intriguing aspect which distinguishes Mark from the other gospels is how often he transliterates Aramaic phrases and words into Greek, and the phrase *Boanerges* here is the first of many examples:

[Those **bolded** are unique to Mark's gospel.]

[These Aramaic words are often, but not always, followed by a translation.]

- ***Boanerges*** - "sons of thunder" (Mark 3:17; not extant in Matt 10:2 or Luke 6:14)
- *Beelzebul* - (not translated in Mark 3:22; also used in Matt 12:24, 27, and Luke 11:15, 18-19)
- ***talitha kum*** - "Little girl, arise" (Mark 5:41); not extant in Matt 9:25 or Luke 8:54)
- ***Corban*** - "an offering to God" (Mark 7:11; not extant in Matt 15:5; no parallel account in Luke)
- ***ephphatha*** - "be opened" (Mark 7:34; not extant in Matt 15:29-31; no parallel in Luke)
- ***rabbi*** - (not translated in Mark 9:5; replaced by "Lord" in Matt 17:4; replaced by "master" in Luke 9:33)
- ***rabbouni*** - (not translated in Mark 10:51; replaced by "Lord" in Matt 20:33 and Luke 18:41)
- *hosanna* - (not translated in Mark 11:9-10; used in Matt 21:9; not extant in Luke 19:38)
- ***rabbi*** - (not translated in Mark 11:21; not extant in Matt 21:20; no parallel in Luke)
- ***abba*** - "father" (Mark 14:36; not extant in Matt 26:39, 42 or Luke 22:42)
- *rabbi* - (not translated in Mark 14:45; used in Matt 26:49; not extant in Luke 22:47)
- *Golgotha* - "the place of the skull" (Mark 15:22; used in Matt 27:33; not extant in Luke 23:33)
- *Eloi eloi lema sabachthani* - "My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?" (Mark 15:34; used in Matt 27:46, not extant in Luke 23:45-46)

Aramaic was from the perspective of its speakers not very different from Hebrew, as John accounted the Aramaic phrase *Golgotha* to be a Hebrew one in his gospel (John 19:17).<sup>43</sup> I would conjecture that the higher quantity of Aramaisms in Mark are a remnant of its oral source through the Hebrew tongue of Simon Peter, who likely related these accounts with vicarious detail, often choosing to utter various words and phrases just as Yahshua had said them, pulling you straight in and immersing you in the story of his memories. When Mark retained this device in writing, it preserved the dramatic impact of Peter's oral gospel. Even if Peter often related his oral gospel in the Hebrew tongue, which is very possible with his being an apostle among the circumcised, Mark still might have chosen to retain the impact of Peter's delivery in these select cases.

The compound Greek form *Βοανηργές* is usually divided as *Βοανῆ-ργές*; the first element (*Βοανῆ*) clearly echoes Hebrew בְּנֵי (bənê, "sons of"), but the second (*-ργές*) has no transparent parallel in Hebrew or Aramaic for "thunder." For this reason some have wondered if Mark's interpretation of *Boanerges* as *sons of thunder* is more symbolic than it is strictly literal, and concerning this I do not know enough to provide an opinion, except that I trust Mark and Peter as native Hebrew speakers to have known much better than we do. We discussed the Hebrew influence behind the Greek of Mark in our introduction to the gospel.

To me, Mark's interpretation of *Boanerges* as *sons of thunder* reveals significant compounding which spiritually verifies it as an accurate interpretation. Just as the name *Petros* provided insight into the character of Simon, so does this interpretation of the name *Boanerges* provide insight into the character of the sons of Zebedee, as well as several prophetic shades of meaning.

These were young boys, and youth often brings with it the fiery vigor of passion. There are three examples in the gospels of the sons of Zebedee demonstrating their zeal:

**Mark 9:38** *Iohannes said to Him "Teacher, we saw someone casting out demons in Your Name and prevented him, because he has not followed with us.*

**Mark 10:37** *Then they said to Him: "Give to us that we may sit one at Your right hand and one at Your left hand in Your honor!"*

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<sup>43</sup> -tha in Golgotha is the Aramaic definite article on a feminine noun in an emphatic state.

**Luke 9:52-56** And He had sent messengers before His face. And going they entered into a village of Samaritans so as to prepare for Him, yet they did not receive Him, because His countenance was for going to Jerusalem. But the students seeing it, Iakobos and Iohannes said "Prince, do You wish that we should speak, to cast down fire from heaven and destroy them?" But turning He censured them, and traveled to another village.

In Luke 9, the sons of Zebedee were (in that case impetuously) asking with great zeal if they should make a thunderous appeal for Yahweh to thunder from heaven, likely being inspired by the account of Elijah the Tishbite which is recorded in what is now 2 Kings 1. The sons of thunder were essentially asking Christ if they should pursue thunderous judgement from God, because any wrathful judgement from God can be seen as *thunder from heaven*, something which is often illustrated in the Psalms, and also in 1 Samuel, where it is written “**And as Samuel was offering up the burnt offering, the Philistines drew near to battle against Israel: but the LORD thundered with a great thunder on that day upon the Philistines, and discomfited them; and they were smitten before Israel.**”<sup>44</sup> In fact, the verb in that passage translated as *thundered* (*râ'am* #H7481), has been conjectured to be etymologically linked to *Boanerges*. The sons of Zebedee asking if judgement should rain down on the Samaritans were certainly acting as sons of thunder!

While the young boys might have been impetuous in that instance, there is nothing wrong with being thunderously zealous for our God if it is done lawfully. As Christ instructed the assembly of Laodicea in His Revelation, “**be zealous and repent!**”<sup>45</sup> Yahshua chose the thunderous sons of Zebedee to be his apostles. He did not choose “the sons of compromise” or “the sons of lukewarmness”. It is interesting that John alone quotes the 69<sup>th</sup> Psalm where it says in prophecy of Christ casting out the dealers from the temple, “**“The zeal for Your house consumes Me!”**”<sup>46</sup>

The apostle John remained a thunderous and zealous man his entire life, as all the apostles. He was not afraid to illustrate in his first surviving epistle that bastards are born antichrists on account of their racial corruption, nor was he afraid to acknowledge that the Edomite Judas was a devil. John did not shy away from defining the racial boundaries of salvation, and his various convictions led to him not being permitted to enter the assembly of the heretic Diotrepehes. That rejection did not bother this son of thunder, because he cared more about the praise of God than the praise of men. Like John, we should live, and if necessary die, as sons of thunder.

There is an interesting tradition which if true shows how John was as thunderous and zealous for Yahweh as ever when he was older and living in Ephesus. In Against Heresies (3.3.4), Irenaeus wrote of a tradition allegedly handed down by Polycarp, who was supposedly a student of John: “**There are also those who heard from him that John, the disciple of the Lord, going to bathe at Ephesus, and perceiving Cerinthus within, rushed out of the bath-house without bathing, exclaiming, “Let us fly, lest even the bath-house fall down, because Cerinthus, the enemy of the truth, is within.”**”

We certainly need more men like the sons of Zebedee today, and while we should seek to emulate the zeal of Christ and His apostles, we must do so wisely and with discretion, because we are in a time of great captivity. We should not risk our families by shouting out things in public or at work that will needlessly endanger us, because we are of little use for our brethren behind bars. We should wait on Yahweh to issue judgement on Mystery Babylon, and in the meantime provide rebuke and instructions to our brethren whenever Yahweh presents the windows of opportunity.

The God who labeled the sons of Zebedee with the name *Boanerges* knew the young boys better than they knew themselves, and was able to label them with a name aptly descriptive of their character. But it does not end with their personalities. Nothing is too impossible for Yahweh God, and the name *Boanerges* was apparently prophetic also, especially when it came to the life of the apostle John, but maybe even James was martyred on account of righteous thunder!

The Greek word for *thunder* which Mark uses in his interpretation of the phrase *Boanerges* is βροντή (#1027); and it only appears elsewhere in the New Testament once in John’s gospel, and then several times in the Revelation of Christ which John received while in exile on the island of Patmos.

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<sup>44</sup> 1 Samuel 7:10

<sup>45</sup> Revelation 3:19 [...]

<sup>46</sup> John 2:17 - Psalm 69:9



In his gospel, John uses the word **βροντή** in a unique account where Yahweh thunderously announced both the accomplished magnification and the coming magnification of His name. This transpired during the final week of Yahshua's ministry in Jerusalem, and those in the crowd who heard the thunderous declaration were ostensibly racially pure, possessing ears able to perceive the voice of the Spirit, while the others who did not hear the voice and only heard thunder were ostensibly bastards. Of course, John being an Israelite, was *a son of thunder* in the sense that he was able to perceive the voice of the thunder as the voice of God, and was able to remember the voice's declaration years later when writing of it in his gospel:

**John 12:27-29** Now My soul is troubled, and what shall I say? Father, save Me from this hour? But for this reason have I come to this hour! Father, magnify Your Name!" Then a voice came from heaven: "I have both magnified and again I shall magnify it!" Therefore the crowd which stood and having heard it said "Thunder has come!" Others said "A messenger spoke to Him!"<sup>47</sup>

As it is written in Job, "the thunder of his power who can understand?"<sup>48</sup> The word for thunder there in Job is *râ'am* (#H7481), the very same word we saw earlier in 1 Samuel 7:10 and which is a theorized source for *Boanerges*. Is it not funny, then, how someone who understood the thunder (*ra'am*) so as far as to even write down its declaration was a Boanerges?

This was not the only time in John's life when he heard and understood a thunderous declaration, because while being shown the Revelation of the Christ on the island of Patmos, John had perceived the utterances of seven thunders but was not permitted to write down their testimony:

**Revelation 10:2-4** [...] And he set his right foot upon the sea, then the left upon the land, and he cried out in a great voice just as a lion roars. And when he cried out, the seven thunders uttered their voices. And when the seven thunders uttered, I was about to write, and I heard a voice from out of heaven saying "I have sealed the things which the seven thunders have uttered, and you should not write these things!"

It is amusing how the utterances of the seven thunders is something which the *son of thunder* had to keep to himself! Again, Yahweh certainly has a sense of humor.

The young apostle could never have anticipated his future on Patmos, but Yahshua being Yahweh certainly did, and so it is fascinating how the name *Boanerges* poetically weaved into the young apostle's fate as an elder, where thunder pealed throughout several of the different visions he received while in exile. Again, the word **βροντή** appears nowhere else apart from Mark 3:17, John 12:29, and nine times in the Revelation, the first of which being when John was shown the throne fixed in heaven, and heard "voices and thunders" going out from it:

**Revelation 4:5** And going out from the throne stars and voices and thunders, and seven lamps of fire burning before the throne, which are the seven Spirits of Yahweh,

Before proceeding with the other thunders, we should note that the Revelation is organized into three main sets of seven judgments, the first set being that of the seals, followed by the trumpets, and then ending with the bowls of wrath pouring out plagues.

John wrote that one of the four living creatures invited him to witness the opening of the seals, and that it invited him with a voice like thunder:

**Revelation 6:1** Then I saw when the Lamb opened one of the seven seals, and I heard one of the four living creatures saying with a voice like thunder: "Come!"

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<sup>47</sup> This account has led me to wonder whether the racial vipers who witnessed Yahshua's immersion in the Jordan heard only thunder instead of the heavenly declaration: "You are My Beloved Son, in You I am satisfied." If so, they must have learned of the declaration's testimony from those who were able to discern it, before ostensibly proceeding to tempt Christ in the wilderness. We discussed these matters in our commentary, [Proclaiming the Message.](#))

<sup>48</sup> Job 26:14 [...]

After the opening of the seventh seal there was a short period of silence for half an hour, and the apparent somberness was followed by the preparations of a golden censer, which being filled with the fire of the altar was cast down to the earth, with sounds of thunders and other great noises:

**Revelation 8:5** And the messenger took the censer and filled it from of the fire of the altar and cast it into the earth, and there were thunders and noises and lightnings and an earthquake.

The seven trumpets were afterwards prepared, and after the pealing of the seventh trumpet, the sound of thunder was heard:

**Revelation 11:19** And the temple of Yahweh who is in heaven opened, and the ark of His covenant is seen in His temple, and there were lightnings and noises and thunders and an earthquake and a great hailstorm.

From here the Revelation transitioned into a great intermediary set of visions before the pouring of the seven plagues, one of those visions being that of 144,000 purchased from among men as a first fruit for Yahweh and the Lamb. The elder John observed this multitude standing on Mount Zion, and they were singing a new song, accompanied by a heavenly sound that he described as musical, like rushing waters, and like great thunder:

**Revelation 14:2** And I heard a sound from out of heaven like a sound of many waters and like a sound of great thunder, and the sound which I heard like lyre-players playing on their lyres.

A few visions later, and the bowls of wrath began to be poured, the seventh representing the fall of Mystery Babylon, and in the pouring of that final bowl which we so anxiously await, there is once again thunder:

**Revelation 16:18** And there were lightnings and noises and thunders and there was a great earthquake, such as had not happened from when man had come to be upon the earth was such an earthquake so great!

The final thunder of the Revelation accompanies a celebratory expectation of the most ultimate judgement, which is that coming day when Yahshua Christ returns to make a complete and quickly executed account upon the earth:

**Revelation 19:6** And I heard like a sound of many multitudes and like a sound of many waters and like a sound of mighty thunders saying "Praise Yah! For Prince Yahweh the Almighty reigns!

Therefore, throughout most of these instances in the Revelation, the sound of thunder is apparently used to signify (at least in part) the power of Yahweh God and His judgments, and so to repeat what we read earlier from Job, “the thunder of his power who can understand?”<sup>49</sup>

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<sup>49</sup> Job 26:14 [...]

To give examples of where thunder accompanied the execution of judgement in the Revelation:

- The peal of thunder was heard shortly after the opening of the seventh and final seal, which was accompanied with a pouring out of fire - fire often representing violence in prophecy.<sup>50</sup>
- The peal of thunder was heard with the blowing of the seventh and final trumpet. This trumpet is accompanied with *hailstones*, which often represent battle and violence in prophecy<sup>51</sup>, as well as an *earthquake*, which often represents the shaking of nations among other things<sup>52</sup>, usually through war, just as the shaking of the heavens represents the shaking of government and rule.<sup>53</sup>
- The peal of thunder was heard with the pouring out of the seventh and final bowl, which is the fall of Mystery Babylon. We know that it is written in Revelation 18 that Babylon falls “*with violence*”, and we also see a great earthquake accompanying this bowl.

So what are we seeing with all this? That in the Revelation, the sound of thunder often accompanies judgments, but specifically violent judgements, identified through the use of violent prophetic symbols. Therefore, it is no surprise that thunder also pealed with the celebratory anticipation of the Second Coming in Revelation 19:6, and the judgement which will be then executed and the war waged.

With all this being said, we can say with all prophetic certainty, that when Christ comes, He will indeed *thunder* from out of heaven:

**1 Samuel 2:10** The adversaries of the LORD shall be broken to pieces; out of heaven shall he thunder (*ra'am* #H7481) upon them: the LORD shall judge the ends of the earth; and he shall give strength unto his king, and exalt the horn of his anointed.

**Isaiah 29:6-7** Thou shalt be visited of the LORD of hosts with thunder (*ra'am* #H7482), and with earthquake, and great noise, with storm and tempest, and the flame of devouring fire. And the multitude of all the nations [*the non-White nations*] that fight against Ariel [*prophetic Jerusalem - the body of the children of Israel*], even all that fight against her and her munition, and that distress her, shall be as a dream of a night vision. [*as if they never existed - Obadiah 1:16*].

But Yahshua will not thunder alone, for upon His return He will gather His people to Himself from the four winds, and select from among them a chosen number to march ahead with Him and the rest of His saints, as they exact vengeance on the bastard nations in the war of the Wedding Supper of the Lamb. It is written, “*Blessed are those invited to the Wedding Supper of the Lamb!*”<sup>54</sup>, and those invited will be *sons of thunder* in that day.

The Scriptures provide clues towards the conditions of the invitation, but even the *son of thunder* John witnesses towards those clues in the example of his own life, because he described himself as “*the student whom Yahshua loved*”:

To be loved by Christ requires one to keep His commandments (John 15:10). Now those who keep the commandments in turn fulfill their obedience, and we know that the fulfillment of obedience allows one to avenge disobedience (2 Cor 10:6). However, if the avenging of disobedience does not take place until the return of Christ,<sup>55</sup> then those who are invited to partake in that ultimate vengeance must be those who fulfilled obedience during their earthly lives.

It can therefore be seen that to keep the commandments in the fulfillment of obedience is what enables one to be invited to the Wedding Supper of the Lamb, under the discretion of Yahweh God for the peculiar cases of each and every individual.

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<sup>50</sup> Obadiah 1:18, Isaiah 9:19, 66:15-16, Joel 2:3-5, Ezekiel 5:1-4, et al

<sup>51</sup> Job 38:22-23, Wisdom 5:22, Isaiah 30:30-33, 32:19-20, Ezekiel 13:11-16, 38:22, et al

<sup>52</sup> Mark 13:8, Ezekiel 38:18-20, et al

<sup>53</sup> Hebrews 12:25-29 (Haggai 2), Revelation 12:7-8, et al

<sup>54</sup> Revelation 19:9

<sup>55</sup> 2 Thessalonians 1:8, Luke 18:7, et al

This understanding adds depth to the Psalms, where it is written “[The righteous shall rejoice when he seeth the vengeance: he shall wash his feet in the blood of the wicked. So that a man shall say, Verily there is a reward for the righteous: verily he is a God that judgeth in the earth.](#)”<sup>56</sup> This is not to mean that any man is able to perfectly keep the commandments, but it is that Yahweh recognizes those who love Him enough to try.

Therefore, John being “the student whom Yahshua loved” is a type for all the sons of thunder, who will be invited to the Wedding Supper on account of their love acted out in faithful obedience. This matter was perhaps also illustrated in the fact that a Benjamite named Iohanan (*the Hebrew form of the name Iohannes*) was among David’s mighty men (1 Chronicles 12:4), a prophetic foreshadow of the Wedding Supper.

The fact that many of those mighty men were Benjamites (1 Chronicles 12:2), [just like the apostles](#), is perhaps prophetic of how all of the apostles will be a part of that army, something which is even prophetically foreshadowed in the gospel of John in the wedding supper in Kana where water (peoples) were turned to wine (blood): oh - and by the way - there is a Hebrew word *qânâ*’ (#7065) which means *zeal*. It says in John concerning that event: “[And Yahshua and His students had also been invited to the marriage-feast.](#)”<sup>57</sup> Another thing: this account of the wedding supper in Kana is only in John’s gospel, the son of thunder’s gospel.

Concerning the prophetic type illustrated in those words, we are all students of Christ if we abide in His word, for as He said, “[If you abide in My Word, truly you are My students](#)”<sup>58</sup> Even Yahshua is invited to His own Wedding Supper on account of having fulfilled His obedience, for it is written in Isaiah 53, “[Therefore will I divide him a portion with the great, and he shall divide the spoil with the strong; because he hath poured out his soul unto death](#)”<sup>59</sup>

Yahshua will return from out of heaven, and those invited to the Wedding Supper will be formed as well-aimed bolts of lightning against His enemies, and where there is lightning there is also thunder. All of the students whom Yahshua loves will be *sons of thunder* in that day, the very label of *Boanerges* being placed upon John itself being a subtle witness of that fact.

**Wisdom 5:16-23** [On this account they shall receive the kingdom of dignity and the crown of beauty from the hand of Yahweh, because with His right hand He shall shelter them, and with His arm He shall defend them. He shall take for a full armor His zeal, and make the Creation a weapon for vengeance upon His enemies. \[Solomon earlier in the chapter illustrated how being part of this weapon of vengeance will be a reward for the righteous at the end of the age\] He shall put on righteousness for a breastplate and place as a helmet unhypocritical judgment. He shall take sanctity for an invincible shield. He shall sharpen severe wrath into a sword, and the Society shall fight with Him against the deranged. \[When the apostle Paul gave his discourse on the armor of God, he said it was so one could “stand in the evil day”, referencing how putting on the armor of obedience in this life allows us to be a part of Yahweh’s armory in that day of vengeance.\] The well aimed bolts of lightning \[where there is lightning there is also thunder!\] shall go forth and as from a well-rounded shield of clouds they shall spring to the target, and from a catapult full of wrath hailstones shall be thrown, the water of the sea shall be vexed against them, and the rivers shall relentlessly overflow them; a powerful wind shall stand against them and as a hurricane it shall winnow them. Then lawlessness shall desolate all the land and evil deeds shall overthrow the thrones of the mighty.](#)

There are two conditions to be invited to the Wedding Supper which are both exemplified in the sons of thunder: the first is to be a saint, which is to be a descendant of Isaac through Jacob. As it is written in the Revelation:

**Revelation 19:8-9** [And it is given to her that she is wrapped in clean bright linen. For the linen is the vindications of the saints!” And he says to me: “Write! Blessed are those invited to the dinner of the wedding-feast of the Lamb!” And he says to me: “These are true words from Yahweh!” \[...\]](#) **14** [And the armies in heaven follow Him upon white horses, clothed with clean white linen.](#)

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<sup>56</sup> Psalm 58:10-11

<sup>57</sup> John 2:2

<sup>58</sup> John 8:31

<sup>59</sup> Isaiah 53:12

It also written in Jude, where the apostle quotes from Enoch:

**Jude 1:14-15** [...] Behold, the Prince has come with ten thousands of His saints to execute judgment against all and to convict every soul for all of their impious deeds which they committed impiously and for all of the harsh things which the impious wrongdoers have spoken against Him!"

The name of *Jacob* the son of Zebedee reflects this first condition for the sons of thunder that they are saints, and the fact that John is the student whom Yahshua loved is reflective of the second condition, which is that they fulfilled their obedience, as we have already noted.

The prophetic meaning of *Boanerges* reveals another dimension of the thunder of war as it interacts with the name of James (Jacob) in another way, because just as the patriarch Jacob (James) *supplanted* his brother Esau, so too will the seed of Jacob supplant the seed of Esau at the end of the age, when Christ comes to destroy the Edomite-Jews and all of other alien races along with them.

This victory is through the gift (*Zebedee*) of favor (*John*) which Yahweh has bestowed upon the children of Israel, on account of His promises to their father Abraham:

**Luke 1:68-75** Blessed is Yahweh the God of Israel, that He has visited and brought about redemption for His people, and has raised a horn of salvation for us in the house of David His servant, just as He spoke through the mouths of His holy prophets from of old: preservation from our enemies and from the hand of all those who hate us! [Edom, like all of the other bastard races, hates Israel (Eze 35:5); but Edom's hegemony over the society will be supplanted in the conquest of the Wedding Supper, and Jacob implicitly means *to supplant*] To bring about mercy with our fathers and to call into remembrance His holy covenant, [Favor/Grace - John] the oath which He swore to Abraham our father, which is given to us: [Gift - Zebedee] being delivered fearlessly from the hands of our enemies to serve Him in piety and in righteousness before Him for all of our days. [When Israel is delivered from the hands of their enemies, this will allow for the promises to Abraham to be kept and fulfilled]

The first primary mercy accomplished for the seed of Abraham through Isaac and Jacob is when Yahweh cast all of the sins of the children of Israel into the sea in the First Advent of the Christ (Micah 7:18-20). The second primary mercy to be accomplished is when Christ returns and *thunders* from heaven to remember mercy through *wrath*, and rescue the children of Israel from the hands of their enemies, as Zacharias described.

This mercy is prophesied of in the third chapter of Habakkuk:

**Habakkuk 3:2-3** O LORD, I have heard thy speech, and was afraid: O LORD, revive thy work in the midst of the years, in the midst of the years make known; in wrath (#7267) remember mercy. God came from Teman, and the Holy One from mount Paran. Selah. His glory covered the heavens, and the earth was full of his praise.

The word translated as *wrath* where it says "in wrath remember mercy" is *rôgez* (#7267). This word has been conjectured by some scholars to be one of the compound words of *Boanerges*. Is that a coincidence?

Of course not.

The sons of Zebedee were ostensibly called *sons of thunder* on account of their zeal, and as it is written "He shall take for a full armor His zeal, and make the Creation a weapon for vengeance upon His enemies". We must all, therefore, "be zealous and repent!"

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