

Supplement to Chapter 1

A few additional notes on chapter 1

From George M. Lamsa's, *Gospel Light, Comments From The Aramaic and Unchanged Eastern Customs on the Teachings of JESUS*.

- **Wilderness** — “barren and silent region without habitation” — not necessarily a dry desert — but wide and uninhabited. When Jesus left the cities for the wilderness, it was to a place where there were no people, a place to be alone — but not necessarily a desert (165-6).
 - Find places to literally be alone to think and pray, thereby following Jesus' example. Here you refresh yourself, become invigorated, motivated, filled with the Spirit, ready to fish for men.
- **John the Baptist prepares the way for Jesus** — they used to send people out to level and clean the roadways when a king was coming to visit. John cleared the mental way for the Messiah so that his message could be heard (165-6).
- **FISHERS OF MEN** — Lamsa explains that this means “you will catch and convert men by speech” (and, of course, by healing works). Lamsa continues, “Jesus meant the disciples were to be so trained and versed in the scripture they could silence even the high priests and would catch men by their words and convert them to the new teaching (168).
- **Evening hour** — It was believed that the sun was not good for sick people. When the sun set, the ill were brought out in the cool air, or to holy men that were healers. “It was at this time that Jesus preached to the people and healed the sick brought to him...” (169).
 - Will you go out to where the sick are gathered for the purpose of speaking spiritual truth and healing? What does “evening hour” look like today?
- **Casting out Devils** — *deva*, in Aramaic. “*Devana* is an adjective meaning insane” (169). There were no insane asylums. Those afflicted stayed with family. If they became violent or too crazy, threatening the community, the family would bind them in chains. The Gadarene was so violent that chains could not hold him. Jesus healed him.
- **Touching the Leper** — Leprosy, so contagious and malignant, caused isolation. No one dared touch a leper — depriving these dear ones from an essential expression of love. When a leper dared to venture out to find Jesus, our Master touched him fearlessly with words of dominion and grace, “... be thou clean.”
- A key concept of chapter one is **CLEAN**; this continues into chapter two, with emphasis on **forgiveness**. Forgiveness is cleansing. It is washing away guilt, remorse, grudge, and other ugly impositions — leaving one baptized, clean, and pure. “Be thou clean,” rests upon us.
- The Word promises, “As far as the east is from the west, so far hath He removed thy transgressions from thee” (*Psalms* 103:12).

From SV (*The Complete Gospels*).

Two dominant themes in Mark — identity and the nature of discipleship.