

## The Prototypical Meaning of the Verb *κηρύσσειν* (to proclaim) in the Gospel of Mark and its Relation to *κηρύσσειν* in Homer, Septuagint, and Josephus

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### ARTICLE INFORMATION

**Received:** June 08, 2021

**Accepted:** July 11, 2021

**Volume:** 4

**Issue:** 7

**DOI:** 10.32996/ijllt.2021.4.7.7

### KEYWORDS

Prototypical meaning, Gospel of Mark, Homer, LXX, Josephus, *κηρύσσειν*, Proclaim

### ABSTRACT

Most scholars seem to purport a very “general” meaning of the verb *κηρύσσειν*. Often, the meanings are coined as hypernyms: “to herald,” “to proclaim,” “to broadcast,” “to announce” or “to preach.” *Ipso facto*, they fail to capture the specific meanings within their contexts—a word that is used within its clausal/ discourse construction activates a meaning potential that may or may not reflect the full “general” idea of the word. As such, modern linguists purport the difficulty to arrive at specific definitions for words. Given this dilemma, the concept of prototype emerges unto the linguistic stage with the potentials to resolve the problem. Using prototype as an approach to find meanings, the objective is to find the best representation of a word, object, or concept (under consideration) within a given category, context, or pericope. On this basis, the research has employed this approach to the verb *κηρύσσειν* in the Gospel of Mark which resulted in the prototypical meaning: *Followers or beneficiaries of Jesus’s deeds, publicly transmitting information about good deeds that have been performed by Jesus for the benefit of humans*. In relation to the meanings in Homer, Septuagint, and Josephus, the results showed considerable differences, along with few similarities. Therefore, the approach and results of this research contribute in a more comprehensive and in a significant manner to our understanding of the verb *κηρύσσειν* in Mark’s Gospel.

### 1. Introduction

The Gospel of Mark is considered by most scholars to be the first of the four canonical Gospels to have been composed (Strauss, 2007). Central in this Gospel is the idea that Jesus is the Messiah who conquers by his suffering as the Servant of the Lord; and in effect models for his disciples to follow (Strauss, 2007). Woven in the Greek of Mark is the verb *κηρύσσειν* which appears fourteen times in the longer form (2x between 16:9–20), and twelve times in the shorter form.

The verb *κηρύσσειν* also appears numerous times in the writings of Homer, the Septuagint (LXX), and Josephus. Though scholars are unaware of the birth and life of Homer, his works (*Iliad* and *Odyssey*) bring to light key features for the studying of the New Testament (NT)—the honor and shame aspect of his writings is one such feature. Though the writings of Homer within the Greco-Roman world were far more influential and studied than any other written work (Phillips, 2013), the LXX was more influential on the NT. The NT never quoted Homer once, but it cites the LXX about 90% of the time when quoting the Old Testament (OT) (McDonald, 2007). Josephus, on the other hand, was born in 37 CE to a wealthy priestly family. His works (*Jewish Antiquities*, *Jewish*

*War, and Against Apion*) have influenced greatly how modern scholars understand First Century Judaism—its sect, laws, politics, religion, and culture; among other historical and theological interpretative insights for the study of the NT Gospels (Bird, 2013).

The verb κηρύσσειν is derived from the noun κήρυξ which carries the ideas of “herald,” “messenger,” or “trumpet-shell.” It seems to have been derived from an Old Indo-European word, *karu*, meaning “singer”; Old Persian *brausa*, “caller” that seems to have been borrowed from an Aramaic term, כִּרְיָא (Silva, 2019). Outside of Jewish/ Christian texts, κήρυξ is used more times than the verb κηρύσσειν. One example is Homer who uses the noun form about ninety times while the verb some ten times (Friedrich, 1964-1976; Silva, 2019).

The verb κηρύσσειν is often understood to mean, “to announce,” “to preach,” “to proclaim,” “to herald,” and “to broadcast” (Beekes & van Beek, 2016; Louw & Nida, 1989; McBride, Neal F, and W Creighton Marlowe, 1981). Robert S. P. Beekes and Lucien van Beek (2016) note that κηρύσσειν is “to act as a herald, announce” (p. 690). Wilhelm Wittich (2018) says it means, “to perform the duties of a herald, to call to a meeting . . . ” (p. 106). Regarding its meaning in the NT: Craig A. Evans (1981) argues that it is the “proclamation of the kingdom of God” (p. 316); Gerhard Friedrich (1964-1976) notes that κηρύσσειν is “the declaration of an event” (p. 703); Johannes P. Louw and Eugene A. Nida (1989) purport that it means, “to publicly announce religious truths and principles while urging acceptance and compliance—to preach” (p. 417); and Kurt Goldammer (1951) elucidates, *Bei den Synoptikern ist das Verb entweder Ausdruck für die Büsspredigt des Täufers (Mt 3 1 Mc 1) mit Buße und Taufe als Inhalt, sonst steht es für die Fi'edigt Jesu* (p. 83). Therefore, these meanings are hypernyms in some cases and in other cases, lack explanations for their purported meanings.

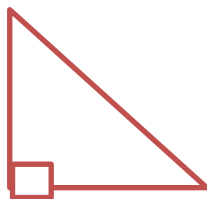
## 2. Methodology: The Concept of Prototypical Meaning

Understanding the meaning of a word or concept is as complex as understanding an ancient word’s etymology whose usage is *hapax legomenon*. Barbara Lewandowska-Tomaszczyk (2007) purports that the diversity of related meanings found in the same word form is one of the observable phenomena in language studies. Anna Wierzbicka (2014) joins the conversation by noting that “the actual usage of individual words is too messy, too unpredictable, to be accounted for by definitions” (p. 347). Nevertheless, Wierzbicka does not leave her readers without a solution as she categorically states, “After years of self-doubt and inferiority complexes, it may seem that semantics has found the key to unlock - at last - the mysteries of meaning. This key resides in the concept of prototype” (p. 345). A prototype is defined by Åshild Næss as,

A prototype incorporates all the properties thought to be characteristic of the category in question, and entities may be judged as good or less good members of the category on the basis of their degree of similarity to the prototype, that is, how many of these characteristics properties they exhibit. An essential property of a prototype category is therefore that it is gradable; entities may be more or less similar to the prototype and therefore be considered to belong to the category to a greater or lesser extent. (Næss, 2010, p.11)

Prototypical meanings find the best representation of an **object, word, or concept**. Consider the meaning of a Right-angle Triangle [**object**].

Figure 1: Right-angle Triangle illustrates a Prototypical Meaning



Consider these possible answers:

1. It has three sides.
2. It has one long side and two shorter sides.
3. It has an opposite side.
4. It has three angles.
5. It can have two equal angles.
6. It has a 90-degree angle and two other angles.

It is clear that all six answers are correct about Right-angle triangles but only answer 6 clearly captures the best meaning/ representation of Right-angle triangles.

Wendy Widder (2014) in her dissertation, *'To Teach' in Ancient Israel*, utilizes the corpuses of the Hebrew Bible (Masoretic Text) and Ben Sira. She studies four Hebrew verbs in their specific *binyanim*, in all their occurrences; after which she categorizes their meaning potentials and unearths four prototypical meanings [**words**]. (1) הָרַי'-H: "A person of authority or expertise gives specific, situational instruction to someone who lacks knowledge about what to do" (p. 64). (2) לָמַד'-D: "To intentionally put another person in a state in which s/he can acquire a skill or expertise through experience and practice" (p. 116). (3) אָדַע'-H: "A person of authority causes another person to be in a state of knowing something from the divine realm or related to experiences with the divine realm" (p. 159). And (4) רָסַי'-D: "To attempt to bring about changed behavior in another person through verbal or physical means, often to the point of causing pain" (p. 187).

Unlike the Aristotelian or the classical view which purports that all members of a class share the same properties and those that do not share the same property should be discarded or woefully inadequate for the definition of a class (Cruse, 2014; Lehrer, 2014), the prototypical view categorizes its class into "good" and "bad" properties. For example, in the case of "bird" [**concept**], ostriches would be a bad property to define "bird;" even though it has wings, it cannot fly. Wierzbicka (2014) notes that "flying is an essential part of the concept of 'bird'" (p. 361). However, "Pigeon" would be a "good" property for the concept because it has wings and is able to fly (Wierzbicka, 2014).

Categorization is significant to meanings. George Lakoff (1990) claims that categorization is the way to understand things and the world. He notes:

Without the ability to categorize, we could not function at all, either in the physical world or in our social and intellectual lives. An understanding of how we categorize is central to any understanding of how we think and how we function, and therefore central to an understanding of what makes us human (Lakoff, 1990, pp. 5, 6).

Whereas categorization is central to meaning, context is the starting point.

Context is very important to begin to unearth meaning potentials for categorization to happen. James Barr (1996) observes that contextual usage of words should always take preference (p. 107). Adele E. Goldberg (1992) notes that even though lexical items have information that contributes to meaning, they cannot capture the full range of data in a given word. She notes, "It has long been recognized that differences in complement configuration are often associated with differences in meaning" (Goldberg, 1992, p.2). William Croft (2012) adds: "A central part of the grammar of every human language is the encoding of events and their participants in a clause" (p. 1). As such, the clausal construction in which the verb κηρύσσειν falls in is paramount to the unearthing of meaning potentials.

Therefore, this study seeks to uncover the prototypical meaning of κηρύσσειν in the Gospel of Mark and its relation to the meanings in Homer, LXX, and Josephus. In order to achieve this, (1) the noun, κήρυξ will be studied in the works of Homer, LXX, Josephus, and the NT, in order to form the background idea of the verb, κηρύσσειν. Each (2) of the twelve occurrences of the verb κηρύσσειν in Mark's Gospel will be studied and a prototypical meaning will emerge from the meaning potentials. The (3) verb, κηρύσσειν in the works of Homer, LXX, and Josephus will be studied in order to unearth a prototypical meaning of each and to observe the relationships they share with the meaning (s) in Mark's Gospel. Finally, (4) a conclusion will summarize the results of the study.

### 3. The Κήρυξ in Homer

The noun, κήρυξ ("herald") identifies someone who is commissioned by a superior to carry out a task. The κήρυξ was a person who had a position—an office in the royal court of the Ancient World. Homer refers to heralds as "official envoys" (Homer, 1998, *Il.* 3.334). He notes that two heralds (κήρυξ) were sent to catch a lamb and to call Priam (Homer, 1998, *Il.* 3.117). Commenting on this statement, Silva (2019) notes, "in Homer, the term is used of attendants of a prince who perform duties that are in keeping with the role of Senior court of officials, whose task is to care for the personal well-being of the prince and of his guests" (p. 674). Elsewhere, Homer notes, "κήρυξ δ' αυτοισιν θαμ επωχετο οιοχοεωων" (Homer, 1999, *Od.* 1.143). In Homer, the duties of the Heralds are not menial: "... free men, not slaves" (Friedrich, 1964-1976, p.684; Homer, 2006, *Od.* 1.109). Friedrich (1964-1976) notes: "One might call them (heralds) adjutants of their princes; they are at their personal service" (p. 684). In order to function effectively as a herald, one needed to have a very loud voice—to call order to a meeting, call citizens to meetings and were responsible to herald the end of a meeting (Friedrich, 1964-1976; Silva, 2019). Homer (1998) notes, "..., but Agamemnon bade the clear-voiced heralds summon to the place of gathering the long-haired Achaeans. And they made summon and the men gathered full quick" (*Il.* 2.51, 52).

The κήρυξ is also one who is sent out with messages by a superior. He is charged with the responsibility to deliver a message and return it to his superior. It is expected that the herald does not express his own views but the views of his superior—whatever message is delivered becomes authentic (Silva, 2019). Therefore, the herald is a spokesman on behalf of his superior.

When a herald is sent with a message to an enemy in times of war, the enemy cannot harm him because this would be a direct transgression of the laws of the gods (Silva, 2019). Homer calls the herald the “messenger of god/ Zeus” (Homer, 1998, *Il.* 1.334; 7.274). As such, the heralds were not just under the authority of their kings or states but also under the authority of the gods (Silva, 2019)

**4. The κήρυξ in the Septuagint, Josephus, and the New Testament**

Unlike Homer and other Greek sources, Jewish sources of the second and first centuries BCE and CE respectively, do not use the noun κήρυξ frequently. In the LXX, the noun κήρυξ is used four times and it identifies a person who carries a message given to him or supported by a superior (usually by a king). In Gen 41:43, the author adds κήρυξ to the verse and makes him the one who calls Joseph before Pharaoh instead of the Pharaoh himself. In Dan 3:4, a κήρυξ is the one who instructs the people to fall down and worship the golden image set up by Nebuchadnezzar; and in 4 Macc 6:4, a κήρυξ tries to convince a Jewish old man who was being whipped that he deserves it because he refuses to accept a command given by Antiochus to eat pig.

In Josephus, the noun, κήρυξ is used about twelve times and usually is described by (1) one who is sent by a superior with a message to a designee. Oftentimes, this happens in the context of war in which a κήρυξ is sent to the enemies’ camp to proclaim a message given by his superior (Josephus, 2003, *Ant.* 4.296, 10.75; *War* 1.128; Josephus, 1888). However, (2) basic to the usage in Josephus is the duty of the κήρυξ to make public announcements—whether he is sent to the enemies’ camp or within his own territory.

Predicated on the duties of the κήρυξ is the power and authority given to him by his superior: ὁ τε κήρυξ δεξιὸς τῷ πολέμαρχῳ παραστάς, εἰ πρὸς πόλεμόν εἰσιν ἔτοιμοι, τῇ πατρίῳ γλώσσει τρίς ἀναπυθάνεται. κάκεινοι τοσαυτάκις ἀντιβῶσιν μέγα τι καὶ πρόθυμον ἔτοιμοι λέγοντες εἶναι, φθάνουσιν δὲ τὸν ἐπερωτῶντα, καὶ τινος ἀρηΐου πνεύματος ὑποπιμπλάμενοι τῇ βοῇ συνεξαίρουσιν τὰς δεξιὰς (Josephus, 1888, *War* 3.92). He does not only stand at the right hand of his General, but he speaks in his audience’s own γλώσσει (language) which indicates supposedly that the κήρυξ was someone who had to be literate not just in speaking but in language.

Finally, in the NT, there are only three occurrences of the noun, κήρυξ. In 2 Tim 1:11, the author says, “εἰς ὃ ἐτέθην ἐγὼ κήρυξ καὶ ἀπόστολος καὶ διδάσκαλος.” The appointment comes as a result of Jesus’s appearance in the world and his work on behalf of humans (v. 10). In 1 Tim 2:7, he states, “εἰς ὃ ἐτέθην ἐγὼ κήρυξ καὶ ἀπόστολος, ἀλήθειαν λέγω οὐ ψεύδομαι, διδάσκαλος ἔθνῶν ἐν πίστει καὶ ἀληθείᾳ.” Paul’s appointment here is as a result of Jesus’ death on behalf of humans (v. 6) And in 2 Pet 2:5, the author notes that Noah is a κήρυξ of righteousness. Therefore, in the first two occurrences, κήρυξ seem to be an appointment into something like an office while in the latter, it seems to qualify the κήρυξ (Noah) as being righteous.

With so many occurrences of the noun κήρυξ in Homer and so little in Jewish (Josephus, LXX) and Christian sources (NT), one would ask why the NT does not utilize this word more often given its positive nuance. Friedrich answers the question by noting, “the point is that it does not really fit the personality of the one who proclaims the word. For the true preacher is God or Christ Himself. The Bible is not telling us about human preachers; it is telling us about the preaching” (Friedrich, 1964-1976, p.696). This evaluation may be right on the level of the emphasis in the NT but so is its emphasis in Homer—on the message and its authority; never so much on the κήρυξ. Nevertheless, this point will be explicated further in the use of the verb in the Gospel of Mark, Homer, LXX, and Josephus, below.

**5. The Meaning Potentials of the Verb κηρύσσειν in the Gospel of Mark**

In the Gospel of Mark, the verb κηρύσσειν appears fourteen times in the longer form (2x in 16:9–20), and twelve times in the shorter form. Nevertheless, the focus of this study is on the shorter form.

**Table 1: Occurrences of the Verb κηρύσσειν in the Gospel of Mark**

Text	Verb	Agent of the Verb	Subject of the verb	Direct Object	Clausal Constructions
1:4	Pres act part, sing nom	John the baptizer	John the baptizer	Baptism of Repentance	Ditransitive
1:7	Imperf act ind, 3.sing	He (John the Baptizer)	He	-	Intransitive
1:14	Pres act part, sing mas nom.	Jesus	Jesus	The ‘Good News’ of God	Transitive

1:38	Aorist act subj, 1.sing	I (Jesus)	I	-	Intransitive
1:39	Pres act part, nom mas sing	Jesus (implied)	Jesus	-	Intransitive
1:45	Pres act infin	Man who is healed (implied)	Man who is healed	-	Intransitive
3:14	Pres act infin	Twelve (disciples)	-	-	Intransitive
5:20	Pres act infin	Demon-possessed man (healed)	Demon-possessed man	-	Intransitive
6:12	Aorist act ind, 3.pl	They (disciples)	They	-	Intransitive
7:36	Imperf act ind, 3.pl	They (a crowd who witness the healing of a man)	They	-	Intransitive
13:10	Aorist pass infin	Peter, James, John, and Andrew (implied, v.3)	The 'Good News'		Intransitive
14:9	Aorist pass subj, 3.sing	-	The 'Good News'	-	Intransitive

There are two broad definitions of the verb in Mark's Gospel which will be explored and argued; from which a prototypical meaning will emerge.

### 5.1. Definition 1: An Inferior Transmitting Information about a Superior

In the Gospel of Mark, there are nine occurrences of the verb κηρύσσειν which carry this meaning. Over and over again, the use of κηρύσσειν is centered on the transmitting of information; not about the one who transmits it (under this definition) but rather concerning someone who has a superior status. As such, this concept is broken down into two sub definitions: (a) The information transmitted is good deeds that are done by a superior, and (b) the information is good deeds done by a superior for a desired result/ purpose.

**5.1.1. Good deeds done by a superior.** Seven occurrences carry this idea of the use of the verb κηρύσσειν in Mark's Gospel. Though Mark 1:45 is not the first occurrence with this idea, it is very pronounced in this verse. The immediate context captures the scene of the healing power of Jesus that makes a leper clean (Vv. 40–42). In this scenario, the leper begs Jesus to make him clean to which Jesus responds by compassion. Having done so, the leper was made healed; then Jesus tells him in an emphatic manner (double negative) not to tell anyone but to show himself to the priest according to the Mosaic law (Vv. 43, 44). The next verse reads, Ὁ δὲ ἐξεληθὼν ἤρξατο κηρύσσειν πολλὰ καὶ διαφημίζει τὸν λόγον, ὥστε μηκέτι αὐτὸν δύνασθαι φανερώς εἰς πόλιν εἰσελθεῖν, ἀλλ' ἔξω ἐπ' ἐρήμοις τόποις ἦν· καὶ ἤρχοντο πρὸς αὐτὸν πάντοθεν.

In this verse, we find the verb κηρύσσειν in an intransitive clausal construction and appears as a present infinitive active. It takes the agent as the leper, though some scholars think it takes Jesus (Mann, 1986; Rogers & Rienecker, 1998)—it is the leper who is charged not to proclaim something to which he does (Mann, 1986; Rogers & Rienecker, 1998). However, the verb κηρύσσειν stands as an inchoative action preceded by the verb ἤρξατο ("he began") which is preceded by an aorist active participle (ἐξεληθὼν). The participle and the main verb (ἤρξατο) convey contemporaneous times thus indicate that the action of κηρύσσειν does not begin after the departure of the leper but while he departs. The use of δὲ, a discourse marker in NT Greek that signals a new development/ scene (Runge, 2010, p.21), forces this point which in this case regulates Jesus to the background and places the leper in the foreground.

Furthermore, in an attributive manner, Mark qualifies κηρύσσειν with the adjective, πολλὰ. The emphasis of the adjective indicates that the leper has no hindrance from proclaiming the good deeds done to/ for him by Jesus. As such, καὶ διαφημίζει τὸν λόγον serves both as an emphasis and exegesis: (1) In order to emphasize the, "what" ("the word" or the gospel) and (2) to explain the proclamation's reach ("spread") of the leper's testimony about what Jesus has done for him. The word διαφημίζειν can mean, "to spread information extensively and effectively concerning someone or something" (Louw & Nida, 1989, p.411).

Mark 5:20 shares the same idea. Jesus visits Gerasene and delivers a man possessed by demons (legions). After which, Jesus tells him to go to his house and proclaim (ἀπαγγέλλω) what the Lord has done for him and how he has mercy on him. Unlike 1:45, the man obeys Jesus's command by proclaiming what was done to/ for him: *καὶ ἀπῆλθεν καὶ ἤρξατο κηρῦσσειν ἐν τῇ Δεκαπόλει ὅσα ἐποίησεν αὐτῷ ὁ Ἰησοῦς, καὶ πάντες ἐθαύμαζον.* Mark notes that he “went away and began” κηρῦσσειν. As such, he uses the aorist ἀπῆλθεν in a factitive manner in which his concern here is not on the internal movement but the result of the action—he left out of the physical presence of Jesus. The aorist verb ἤρξατο is used in an inchoative manner to mark the entrance of the action of κηρῦσσειν. The clause, ἐν τῇ Δεκαπόλει identifies the locative description of the action of κηρῦσσειν and joins ὅσα (“all that”) which introduces the content of κηρῦσσειν, “all that Jesus did for him.” The dative of interest (αὐτῷ) emphasizes that the proclamation is not something that will happen but something that Jesus has already done.

Mark 7:36 echoes this idea. After the healing of a deaf man, unlike 1:45 and 5:20, he summons the people (not the healed man) not to tell anyone about what he has done: *καὶ διεστείλατο αὐτοῖς ἵνα μηδενὶ λέγωσιν· ὅσον δὲ αὐτοῖς διεστέλλετο, αὐτοὶ μᾶλλον περισσότερον ἐκήρυσσον.* The clause, ὅσον δὲ αὐτοῖς διεστέλλετο suggests that Jesus emphatically over and over pleads with the people not to disclose what he has done to/ for the deaf man. This clause stands in contrast with the final clause in the verse: *αὐτοὶ μᾶλλον περισσότερον ἐκήρυσσον.* As such, the more Jesus pleads, the more the people proclaim what was done. This can be illustrated as:

- A but
- B as much as
- C he commands them
- C' they proclaim
- B' more and more
- A' instead

The chiasmic structure does not explicitly state what is being proclaimed. It, nevertheless, pragmatically highlights the content of the proclamation. However, the emphasis is on the proclamation which in effect informs the meaning of ἐκήρυσσον—it is a proclamation of what Jesus did for a deaf man. Verse 37 buttresses this point: “Even the deaf is made to hear and the mute to speak” (my translation). The final three occurrences of the verb κηρῦσσειν make this point in a less direct manner, but more so from a theological perspective.

In 14:9, Mark reads, *ἀμὴν δὲ λέγω ὑμῖν, ὅπου ἐὰν κηρυχθῆ τὸ εὐαγγέλιον εἰς ὄλον τὸν κόσμον, καὶ ὁ ἐποίησεν αὕτη λαληθήσεται εἰς μνημόσυνον αὐτῆς.* This verse is set in the context of an unknown woman who pours a very costly oil on the head of Jesus to which Jesus's disciples respond in disagreement with such an act because for them, this costly oil could have been sold and the money given to the poor. Jesus, in response to the disciples, commends the act of the woman (vv. 6–8) and further claims in v. 9 that wherever the “good news” is preached, her act will be told in memory of her.

On the surface, it seems that the “good news” (content) is the woman's kind gesture towards Jesus, but a deeper look shows that her act is an addition to the “good news” of the act of κηρυχθῆ. The subject of the verb κηρυχθῆ is τὸ εὐαγγέλιον which indicates the emphasis of what should be proclaimed. That is, “τὸ εὐαγγέλιον” is in the foreground of the sentence while “καὶ ὁ ἐποίησεν αὕτη λαληθήσεται εἰς μνημόσυνον αὐτῆς” is in the background as a dependent on the act of the proclamation of the “good news” in all the world. Robert Gundry concurs with this by citing the preposition εἰς as an indication of purpose or result of the verb κηρυχθῆ in which he notes that “the memory must follow rather than precede the talk” (Gundry, 1993, pp.818, 19).

Furthermore, the word εὐαγγέλιον in Mark refers to “good news” concerning Jesus (objective genitive). Mark begins his Gospel with τοῦ εὐαγγελίου Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ and cites Isaiah to emphasize that the Messiah is here—the act of God in human history has come to our world, not will come, but has already come. In addition, C. S. Mann (Mann, 1986) correctly notes that εὐαγγέλιον was used in the Ancient World to announce the victory of a battle (p.205). In effect, εὐαγγέλιον speaks about something already done. Therefore, the “good news” is that that which has already happened; hence, the meaning of κηρυχθῆ.

In Mark 1:7, the idea of transmitting information about what a superior has done is evident. The verb ἐκήρυσσεν is an imperfect; suggesting that John's preaching from the view of Mark is in past time. In contrast, the content of the ἐκήρυσσεν tells us about the superior who John claims he (John) is not worthy to untie the straps of his sandals. The contrast between John and Jesus bears a potent point, in which Mark, in vv. 7—8 uses an aorist tense to describe John's action while using present tenses to describe Jesus's actions: “there is one coming (ἔρχεται) who is mightier than I; I baptized (ἐβάπτισα) you with water but he baptizes (βαπτίζει) you in the Holy Spirit” (my translation). The use of the dramatic present here is more than a stylistic feature of Mark; instead, it is a theological purpose of Mark to portray that the acts of Jesus are currently with his people; and hence gives meaning

to the verb ἐκήρυσσεν in the pericope—it is the transmitting of information of what Jesus the superior has done and still doing—he has come into the world for the benefit of humanity.

Mark 13:10 is pitched within the context of Jesus predicting the destruction of Jerusalem, the end of the age, and the signs that will signal both events. Verse 10 reads, καὶ εἰς πάντα τὰ ἔθνη πρῶτον δεῖ κηρυχθῆναι τὸ εὐαγγέλιον. Similar to 14:9, τὸ εὐαγγέλιον is the subject of the verb κηρυχθῆναι [passive infinitive]. The focus of the sentence is the “good news” to be preached. As such, the κηρυχθῆναι expresses the transmitting of “good news” “first to all the nations” which intern indicates the “good news” about Jesus (his acts in human history). This “good news” is expressed as a necessity (δεῖ) to be proclaimed.

Mark 3:14 carries this idea in a subtle manner wherein Jesus appoints twelve disciples to be with him and to send them out to κηρύσσειν. However, v. 15 exegetically uncovers the content of their preaching which is able to inform the meaning of the infinitive, κηρύσσειν. It notes that they will have authority to cast out demons—this, in the context of Mark happens because the Messiah has arrived. This is a recapitulation of 1:14–15 of which the time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God has arrived (Boring, 2012, p.69). As such, the messianic hope is present among the people and this is what is being announced through public proclamation and demonstration (miracles); hence a proclamation that demonstrates that something has happened on behalf of humanity—the messiah is here.

**5.1.2. Good deeds done by a superior for a desired result/ purpose.** There are two occurrences that echo this idea about the verb κηρύσσειν (1:4 and 6:12). In 1:4, it occurs within the context of the prologue in which John is introduced as the fulfillment of an OT prophecy (Isa 40:3) who is responsible to prepare the way of the Lord by publicly proclaiming the forgiveness of sins, repentance, and the introduction of the Lord (“son of God”) who is mightier than John is; of whom he is not worthy to even untie his sandals. The verse reads, ἐγένετο Ἰωάννης [ὁ] βαπτίζων ἐν τῇ ἐρήμῳ καὶ Ἰηρῶσων βάπτισμα μετανοίας εἰς ἄφεσιν ἁμαρτιῶν. The verb ἐγένετο identifies the movement of John on the scene and ἐν τῇ ἐρήμῳ locates him. As such, the aorist verb and the two participles convey purpose—John appears in order to baptize and proclaim the baptism of repentance. In addition, the proclaiming of the baptism of repentance is attached to a purpose phrase: εἰς ἄφεσιν ἁμαρτιῶν. It is for this reason why John preaches—for the forgiveness of sins which echoes the present reality of the Messianic hope in the world.

In 6:12, the idea of preaching with a desired result is evident. The verse is within the context of Jesus commissioning his disciples to carry the message to other people and his instruction on how they should operate on the mission field. Verse 12 begins to narrate the response of the disciples to Jesus’s command, “to go”: Καὶ ἐξελθόντες ἐκήρυξαν ἵνα μετανοῶσιν. The aorist participle and the main verb (aorist) denote contemporaneous time (Wallace, 2000, p.269). It indicates that the actions of the disciples departing and proclaiming happen together. On the other hand, the subjunctive phrase, ἵνα μετανοῶσιν, indicates the desired result of ἐκήρυξαν. Stein (2008) notes that ἵνα introduces the content of preaching instead of the purpose (p. 293). Nevertheless, the word μετανοῶσιν is understood to be a noun of action which suggests that it is both a desired result and part of the content of preaching. Furthermore, v. 13 activates the Messianic-present reality by noting that they cast out demons and perform healing which in effect conveys the idea of “good deeds” done by a superior.

## 5.2 Definition 2: Superior Transmitting Information

The second definition of the verb κηρύσσειν is found in three occurrences in the Gospel of Mark and they all carry the idea of “good deeds done by a superior.” Interestingly, all three occurrences are found within the first chapter and all three have Jesus as the agent of the verb. In 1:14–15, a new section has been introduced with the prepositional clause, “Μετὰ δεῖτὸ παραδοθῆναι τὸν Ἰωάννην as an antecedent to the actions of, ἦλθεν and κηρύσσων.” Jesus comes on the scene, after the arrest of John, proclaiming the “good news” of God. Here, the present participle, κηρύσσων is a transitive verb that tells what the agent is proclaiming (“good news of God”); and the historical present dramatizes the vocality of Jesus’s action. Furthermore, v. 15 is used exegetically to identify the content of the message. The content calls to attention that the time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God has come near. Collins (2007) notes that these expressions indicate that the OT prophecies and the people’s hope are in the process of fulfillment (p.154).

Nevertheless, Mark uses two Greek verbs in the perfect tense (*πεπλήρωται* ὁ καιρὸς καὶ ἤγγικεν ἡ βασιλεία τοῦ θεοῦ) which in this case picture the completed and ongoing potency of the actions. Gundry (1993) notes that the perfect tenses denote arrival, not imminence (p. 65). As such, that which has already arrived is the Messiah who already has been announced in vv. 1–8; hence, this idea indicates that the use of κηρύσσων takes on the meaning of transmitting information about something that has already happened concerning someone. Furthermore, the content of κηρύσσων carries the desired purpose as well: “repent and believe in the good news” (my translation).

This idea is evident in 1:38, 39 in which the verb occurs twice, respectively. In these occurrences, the verb is used, though in a technical sense, does not give the idea of the desired result. What does emphasize is, (1) the reason Jesus comes into Galilee: “And he said to them, let us go elsewhere into the next town so that I may preach there; for this *reason*, I came” (my translation). As such, the verb gives the idea of transmitting information to someone. Verse 39 is the action of the command in v. 38: “And he

came preaching in their synagogues, throughout all Galilee and casting out demons” (my translation). In the second occurrence (2) the idea of transmitting something that has been done is portrayed in the clause, “casting out demons.” This is a recapitulation of 1:14—15 of which the time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God has arrived (Boring, 2012). As such, the messianic hope is present among the people.

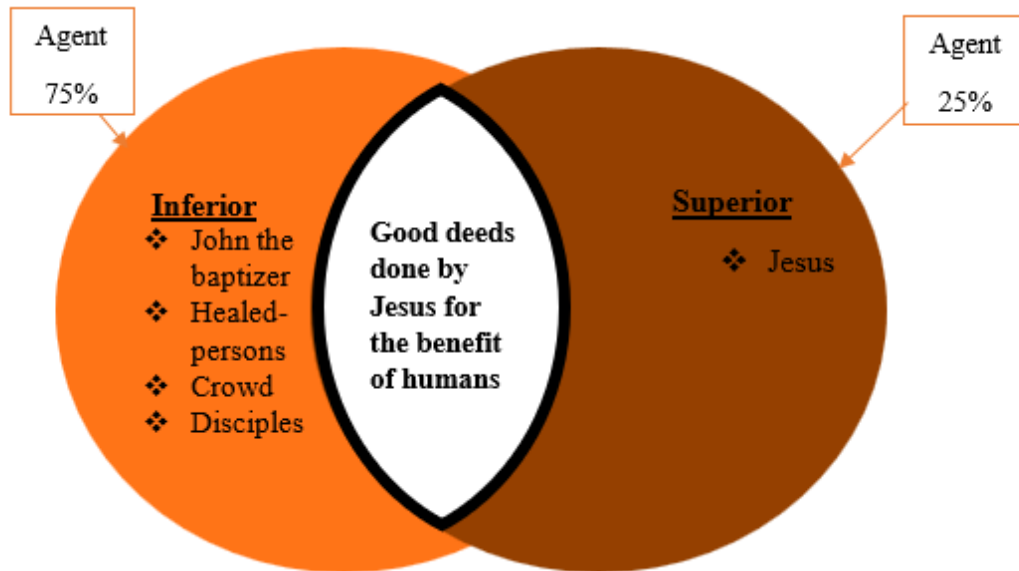
**6. The Prototypical Meaning of the Verb κηρύσσειν in the Gospel of Mark**

In the twelve occurrences of the verb κηρύσσειν in the Gospel of Mark, it seems that the broad idea of the verb is: *An inferior/superior publicly transmitting good deeds that have been performed by a superior for the benefit of humans.*

This concept is seen in 1:45; 5:20; and 7:36; in which the agents of the verb κηρύσσειν are, (1) individuals healed by Jesus, and (2) a crowd that witnessed someone’s restoration by “good deeds” performed by Jesus (superior). Both groups proclaim what is done. In 1:7, John the baptizer is the agent of κηρύσσειν who is sent to prepare the way of the Messiah (superior) to which he preaches a baptism of repentance. The content of his message indicates that something has happened for humanity. The Messiah has arrived; the one who brings hope to Israel. In 13:10 and 14:9, the agent of the verb is implied to be the followers of Jesus (disciples). Nevertheless, Jesus is the one who directly commissions his disciples to proclaim the “good news” (εὐαγγέλιον)—that which has been done, the Messiah has arrived for the benefit of humanity.

In 1:4 and 6:12, though the emphasis is desired purpose/ result, John the baptizer and the disciples are commissioned to proclaim something that has been done with present potency. The disciples are commissioned to have power over demons (6:13), an expression in Mark that captures the Messianic presence in the world for the benefit of humans. Lastly, in a lesser extent, the superior (Jesus), who is the agent of κηρύσσειν thrice, proclaims that the time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God has arrived—the Messiah has come (1:45). In addition, casting out demons attaches to his preaching (1:38-40) is also a demonstration of that present reality of God’s benefit to humanity on earth. Even though Jesus is the superior here [**less good**], the idea of goods deeds performed by a superior is evident [**good**].

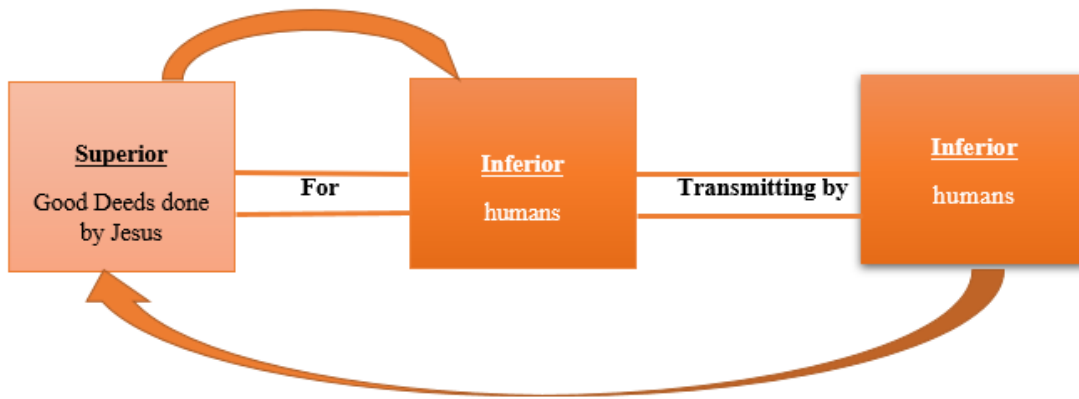
Figure 2: Percentage of the Agents of the verb κηρύσσειν in Mark’s Gospel



It is calculated to be 75% (9/12) of the occurrences of the verb, κηρύσσειν captures the full idea of the Prototypical meaning while 25% (3/12) captures part of the same meaning. Whether the verb takes the superior (Jesus) or the inferior as agents, they both transmit good deeds done by Jesus—whether information about miracles (healing/ restorations) or by the Messianic presence in the world (“Good News”).

Figure 3: Prototypical Meaning of the Verb κηρύσσειν in Mark’s Gospel





Therefore, the prototypical meaning reads: *Followers/ beneficiaries of Jesus's deeds, publicly transmitting information about good deeds that have been performed by Jesus for the benefit of humans.*

### 7. The Meaning of the Verb Κηρύσσειν in the Writings of Homer

Unlike the numerous uses of κήρυξ in Homer, the verb κηρύσσειν is only used ten times (Friedrich, 1964-1976). Friedrich (1964-1976) notes that it "repeatedly" means, "to call to someone" (p. 697). This deduction, he derives from the verb καλέω that occurs paralleled to κηρύσσειν not just in Homer (1998, *Il.* p. 443) but in other Greek texts. Nevertheless, the parallelism of two verbs does not indicate that the verbs must be considered to have the exact meaning in every case of usage because words are used as a parallel for emphasis and other linguistic reasons.

In Homer (1998, *Il.* 2.51–53, 437–443), King Agamemnon summons the κήρυξ to carry a message to the Achaeans calling them to assemble. The Achaeans' army was scattered, and a message is sent to κηρύσσειν for them to come together; hence, οἱ [represents the herald] μὲν ἐκηρύσσον, τοὶ δὲ ἡγείροντο μάλ' ὤκα. This point is germane with *Od.* 2.7, 8 which also narrates the same scenario in *Il.* 2 above. Seven times the verb κηρύσσειν explicates the aforementioned meaning. Also, the act of the κηρύσσειν is a public affair—it is in the public that the act of κηρύσσειν is performed.

Therefore, when the verb κηρύσσειν is studied within contexts in Homer, the prototypical meaning that is overt is: *The transmitting of information given to an inferior by a superior to take publicly to a designee for the purpose of coming together.*

### 8. The Meaning of the Verb Κηρύσσειν in the Septuagint

In the LXX, the verb is used over thirty times (about 33x) and translates from a range of Hebrew verbs such as קרא, רוע and clausal expressions like ויתנ־יקול (2 Chr 24:9) and ויעבר־קול (Exod 36:6; 2 Chr 36:22), with the general idea, *to give a message through public proclamation to a designee.* This idea is often given by a prophet in the context of judgment to a designated people (to pagan nations, Israel, Judah). The prophets act on the divine's behalf; *ipso facto* indicates them as inferiors.

However, the most emphatic idea of the act of κηρύσσειν is, *the proclaiming of the will of a superior, whether it is an earthly leader or the divine, to a designee for a desired purpose.* This idea is seen in 2 Chr 24:8, 9 in which King Joas summons men to carry a message to Jerusalem for them to bring an offering to the Lord. Note that the purpose of the act of proclamation is indicated (the bringing of offerings to the Lord). In 2 Chr 36:22, the superior (YHWH) summons a pagan king (inferior) to κηρύσσειν publicly in writing so that the walls of Jerusalem can be rebuilt. Jehoshaphat calls Judah together and proclaims a fast in order to seek the divine's will (2 Chr 20:3). Even though the purpose is to seek the divine's aid, it is Jehoshaphat's will for a fast to be proclaimed; and in the text, he is the superior (king) in contrast to Judah. Moses instructing (κηρύσσειν) the Israelites to stop bringing the offering to the sanctuary (Exod 36:6); the proclamation (κηρύσσειν) for the rebuilding of Jerusalem (Ezra 2:1); and Judas instructing (κηρύσσειν) every person to pitch his own tent (1 Macc 5:49); all have purposes attach to them. These proclamations take place publicly as is evident in almost always every use of κηρύσσειν.

The act of proclamation carries authority not necessarily rested on the one who proclaims but the one whose will is carried out. In 2 Chr 24:9, King Joas cites Moses in order to solidify his authority for the proclamation. In Esther 6:9 Aman, an inferior to the king asks (κηρύσσειν) the king to instruct someone of his choice to κηρύσσειν in a dramatic manner for the honor of the king. Here, the authority is on the king not on the inferior who requests the king. In Jonah 3:7, a pagan king κηρύσσειν a fast because he believes the divine's word (Jonah's God)—hence the authority rest not on the superiority of the pagan king to his people but on

the words of the divine through the mouth of the prophet, Jonah. The prevalent idea of the verb κηρύσσειν in the LXX: *A public announcement/ instruction of a superior's will that is given to a designated person/ people through the medium of an inferior or by a superior for a desired purpose.*

Therefore, the prototypical meaning reads, *A public announcement/ instruction of a superior's will to a particular designee for a desired purpose*

### **9. The Meaning of the Verb Κηρύσσειν in the Writings of Josephus**

In the writings of Josephus, the verb κηρύσσειν is used about twenty-two times in contexts of war, prison, cultic setting, reports, and in general. In his writings, about twelve times is the idea of *an inferior who receives a message from a superior, whether an earthly leader or the divine, to take to a designated person/ people.*

Herod (superior) orders someone among his company to announce (κηρύσσειν) to the people of Jerusalem that he (Herod) has not come for war but for the preservation of the city and the benefits of the people (Josephus, 2003, *Ant.* 14.402, 03; Josephus, 1888). A King calls for anyone within his kingdom (inferior) who will explain (κηρύσσειν) to him the writing on the wall (Josephus, 2003, *Ant.* 10.235). Whereas the message is from the king to “anyone”, the king is also the designated person of address who will receive this message. In *Ant.* 9.208, 214, Jonah is ordered by the divine to declare to Nineveh a message. In addition, a false prophet, claiming divine authority, instructs people to climb a wall (Josephus, 1888, *War* 6.285; *Ant.* 4.274).

Even though in some cases, the authority of the proclamation is on the sender (usually a superior), emphasis is also on the agent. *Ant.* 10:235 shows that the one who will explain the writing on the wall to the king is the agent and authority of the explanation, not the king. In *Ant.* 4.278, a command is given that whoever finds gold or silver should proclaim (κηρύσσειν) the place where he finds it so that it can be restored to the owner. The emphasis of κηρύσσειν here is not the one who makes a gnomic exhortation but the one who will choose to κηρύσσειν the place so that the loss item can be restored.

To show even more that Josephus does not think that an inferior alone should make proclamation (unlike Homer), he notes that Saul, the king, κηρύσσειν to the people to be ready for war against the Philistines (Josephus, 1888, *Ant.* 6.121). In *Ant.* 13.84, he notes that Alexander compelled his captains to travel with him to κηρύσσειν in the streets. Josephus never employs the noun κήρυξ as the subject or agent of the verb κηρύσσειν, even though he uses it about twelve times in his writings.

Even though the authority is rested sometimes on the sender (superior) and other times on the agent, a desired “change” (purpose) is expected to take place from the act of κηρύσσειν which in effect marks its emphasis more on what is proclaimed rather than on who is the agent or source/ sender. Aside from this, κηρύσσειν is used about three times in the act of announcing negative/ wicked things that have happened (Josephus, 1888, *War* 1.5524, 525; 2.278); Hence, in *War* 2.278, Gessius is accused of publicly κηρύσσειν wicked things he has done.

Therefore, based on the analysis of the verb κηρύσσειν in Josephus' writings, the prototypical meaning reads: *A public announcement/ instruction that is given to a designee for a desired purpose*

### **10. Conclusion**

The prototypical meaning of κηρύσσειν in the Gospel of Mark reads: *Followers or beneficiaries of Jesus's deeds, publicly transmitting information about good deeds that have been performed by Jesus for the benefit of humans.* This meaning shares various differences and similarities with the meanings and uses of κηρύσσειν in the writings of Homer, LXX, and Josephus.

#### **10.1 The Differences**

In (1) Homer, the one who performs the act of κηρύσσειν is always identified as a κήρυξ (herald) while in Mark, LXX, and Josephus, it does not have such a designation. Furthermore, in Mark, an inferior can be, either a follower of Jesus, beneficiaries of Jesus's good deeds, someone who is commissioned to proclaim, or a crowd who witnesses good deeds performed by Jesus. In (2) the LXX and Homer, the emphasis of the act of κηρύσσειν is on the will of the superior—what he wants to be done; while in Mark, the emphasis is on the good deeds of the superior (Jesus)—that which has been done for the benefits of humans. In (3) Homer, and the LXX, authority is rested on the superior's will while in Mark, it is on the good deeds performed by the superior; and in Josephus, it is on the desired result. In (4) Homer, the purpose of the act of κηρύσσειν is for an army to come together while in Mark, it is to repent, to baptize, and to announce the messianic hope. In (5) the LXX, Homer, and Josephus, the act of κηρύσσειν is almost always a verbal act while in Mark, it goes beyond the verbal in some cases to a demonstrative act (casting out of demons, and healing). In (6) Homer, the act of κηρύσσειν is always the commanding will of a superior while in Mark, it is sometimes the will of the inferior—Jesus sometimes exhorts the people not to proclaim but they do it anyway. Finally, (7) While there is an element of purpose in Mark, this is a dominant feature in Homer, LXX, and Josephus.

## 10.2 The Similarities

The broad similarities are fewer than the differences. The uses of κηρύσσειν in all the sources portray the act of κηρύσσειν, (1) to be carried out publicly, (2) humans perform the act, (3) the act is authoritative—whether by the will of a superior or the good deeds of a superior.

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