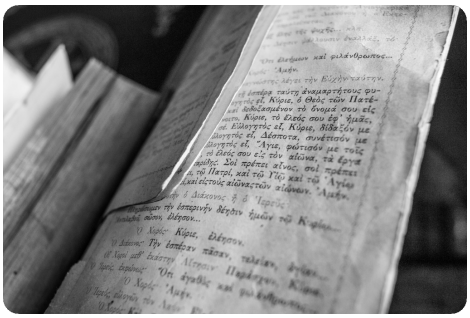
The Deity of Jesus in Mark's Gospel

Big picture: Although being one of the earliest parts of the New Testament to be written, Mark's Gospel shows us clearly that Jesus is God. This counters the claim that John's Gospel's view of Jesus was a later development by Christians. According to Mark, Jesus is none other than the LORD himself.

1. Muslims claim a divine Jesus is a later development by Christians



The New Testament is full of references that show Jesus' divinity. Many of our key go-to verses to show that Jesus is God, come from John's Gospel , (e.g. John 1:1-2, John 5:23 or John 8:58), or the letters of Paul (e.g. Colossians 1:15, Colossians 2:19 or Philippians 2:51). From a Christian perspective, there is no issue with this. From an early date, hundreds of years before Islam, all 27 books we have in the New Testament were accepted as part of the Bible canon2.

The issue we find, however, when reaching Muslims, is they often object to the deity of Christ, asserting that the doctrine of the deity of Christ was a later development within Christianity, emerging after the time of Jesus and his disciples. They argue that early followers of Jesus, including his disciples and the early Christian communities, did not believe in his deity, but rather considered him as a human prophet and then later Christians embellished details of his life and identity making him divine.

Shabir Ally, a leading Muslim apologist in a debate with William Lane Graig states:

> *"the Qur'an also talks about the idea of God not having a son. And it is interesting to notice that the idea that Jesus is the Son of God is thought by Biblical scholars to be a later development in Christian understanding of Jesus. You might be surprised, because today you read the gospels and you find that Jesus refers to himself as the Son of God in the Gospel according to John. But Christian theologians think that this is a later development."3 When Ally says "Christian theologians", it's interesting that here he and in other places draws from liberal Christian scholars to bolster his claims. In the context above he quotes James Dunn, the key argument being that each Gospel writer employs different language or has a different emphasis of on what is recorded in their texts. Mark for example has Jesus self-referencing himself using phrases like "I'm this or that" only 9 times, whereas John uses it "a whopping 118 times".*
>
> *However, rather than point to a development or mythologising of who Jesus is, it just shows that each Gospel writer chose to focus on a different aspect of Jesus life, teaching and identity, or do so in a different way. We will see that a key way Mark shows who Jesus is, is by drawing parallels to the LORD in the OT, whereas John focuses on the words Jesus said that reveal his identity. Of course, you only need one declaration of Christ's divinity in an early text to show that it wasn't a development. It's also wrong assumption that the title "Son of God" is the only expression which reveals Jesus' deity.*
>
> *Shabir goes on to say in another debate that, "the Gospels writing over time have put words into the mouth of Jesus and it cannot be reliably said that Jesus himself claimed to be the Son of God and much more than this, definitely he didn't claim to be [the] second person of the Holy Trinity, he didn't claim to be co-equal and coeternal with God, so in the end we have good evidence and we agreed that Jesus was [just] a prophet of God and … not the ontological4 Son of God.5" As we will see below, Mark presents us with evidence to show that Shabir is badly mistaken about who Jesus is.*
>
> *Muslims also love to quote Bart Ehrman too. Mohammad Hijab6 recently interviewed him and summarise Ehrman's views saying:*

"...in your books you differentiate between the Gospel of John ... and the synoptics [claiming] there has been a development to a higher Christology and in John ... it seems like the author of the Bible ... thinks Jesus ... is divine, but that in the synoptic Gospels, Matthew Mark and Luke, this is less prominent..." to which Ehrman agrees, albeit claiming that, "i think that all of these gospel authors think that in some sense Jesus is God"7. If such embellishments did take place, it would have had to take place while the eyewitnesses of Jesus were still alive. Even appealing to conservative dates, there is only 40-year gap between the first Gospel (Mark, 53-55 AD) and the last Gospel (John, 89–95 AD) being written. Muslims also need to answer why material that is much earlier than John is also rejected like the letters of Paul, many of which also date back to the early 50s8.

Nonetheless, Muslims claim that the Jesus of Mark is closer to the Jesus of Islam9 and any claim coming from Jesus claiming otherwise cannot be trusted. As Christians we are not beholden on Muslims to constrain ourselves to one particular set of New Testament texts, yet in some contexts there is value in being able to show who Jesus is from any part of the Bible. As Mark is probably the first Gospel to be written10 there is value in being able to show who Jesus is from there especially to counter the claim that Christian ideas about Jesus developed over time.

So how does Mark present Jesus? Is it indeed possible to show the deity of Jesus from Mark's Gospel? The answer is yes in a number of profound ways.

2. Mark equates Jesus as the Son of God with being Yahweh

In the introductory verse in Mark's Gospel, we are told clearly who Christ is, "The beginning of the good news about Jesus the Messiah, the Son of God" (Mark 1:1). Here Mark uses two titles to refer to Jesus, "Messiah" and "Son of God".

First off, we need to be careful that we don't claim the title, "Son of God" is an irrefutable claim to his deity in and of itself. While we might think that this title always equates to being God, the title is used quite broadly in Scripture. King David is ascribed to being the son of God in Psalms 2 as he is coronated as King. Luke in his genealogy states that Adam too is known as the "son of God" (Luke 3:38). Both David and Adam are given this title to show the authority bestowed on them by God to rule, Adam over creation (see Genesis 1:26 and 28) and David as King over Israel. Angels are also known as "sons of God" (see Job 1:6 and Job 2:1) as is Israel as a nation (Hosea 11:1; cf. Exod 4:22 and Matt. 2:15)11. However, when the title is used for Jesus, it conveys the meaning of his unique eternal relationship with God as his Father1213. Of course, if the title "son of God" can be used for Adam or David to show the authority they have been given by God, it is a very fitting title for Jesus who is God himself14.

However, Mark does show us that we should understand Jesus' sonship to describe who he is in his being, as in the very next two verses he qualifies Jesus' identity using two quotes from the Old Testament. As the Old Testament points us towards future hope there are many verses that point forward to the coming of the Messiah15. Many of these verses give us details of the life of Jesus, details about the cross and the reason the Messiah would come. However, some verses show us that it is the Lord Himself that will come to rescue and deliver his people. The two verses that Mark quotes are such verses. Specifically, each verse says that a messenger will come preparing the way for the Lord himself. In Isaiah 40:3, one in the wilderness will prepare the way for the LORD himself. Malachi, has the LORD himself speaking in the first person, saying the messenger will, "prepare the way before me." In both cases it is clear that Mark sees Jesus not just as a figure of human origin who has been given an elevated role as "a son", but the LORD himself who has now come in the flesh is the unique divine Son of God, with his coming as such a direct fulfilment of these two verses.

Mark's use of these two Old Testament verses also guards us against an "adoptionist" view of Jesus' sonship, the idea held by some Gnostics, that Jesus became the Son at his Baptism16. Jesus is not someone elevated into the position of Son, but as the LORD, someone who has been Son from eternity17.

It should be noted that Muslims will often object to Mark starting his Gospel calling Jesus the Son of God as

"some manuscripts do not have the Son of God"18 in Mark 1:1. This isn't actually a huge issue as the idea that Jesus is the Son of God is found right through Mark. The voice of the Father from heaven declares it in Mark 1:11 as Jesus is baptised, the demons confess it in Mark 3:11 and Mark 5:7, again the Father from heaven declares it a second time at his transfiguration in Mark 9:7. Jesus confesses it himself at his trial in Mark 14:61, and finally Mark has the centurion declaring it as the climax of the Gospel. And as we have seen, with or without "Son of God" in Mark 1:1, Mark is crystal clear who Christ is in the very next two verses.

In Mark 12 too Jesus declares himself to be the Son in the parable of the tenants (Mark 12:6-8), but then again at the end of the chapter. Jesus has just been questioned by the Pharisees and Sadducees, Jesus then poses a question to those listening to them referring back to those who had questioned him. "Why do the teachers of the law say that the Messiah is the son of David?" he asks, quoting them Psalms 110:1 (See Mark 12:34-37). In Psalms 110:1 the LORD speaks to one who is said to be Lord (Adonai – a title used for God in the OT19) and in a place only God can be seated (at my right hand). In other words, the Messiah, the son of David, is no one other than God himself. What is significant here too is that Jesus has just quoted the Shema in the immediately preceding verses. Mark is wanting us to draw a clear link between the Shema, the greatest declarations of the oneness of God and Christ's identity as God himself20.

Jesus' calming of the storm in Mark 4:35-41 is also loaded with meaning. Psalms 107:23-30 speaks of the Lord who "spoke and stirred up a tempest that lifted high the waves." but who also, "stilled the storm to a whisper; the waves of the sea were hushed." In Mark 4:21, after Jesus calms the storm, the disciples ask, "Who is this? Even the wind and the waves obey him!" Mark will answer that drawing a parallel from Jesus to the God of the Exodus in the preceding chapters.

3. Jesus is the God of the Exodus according to Mark

Another way that Jesus shows us the identity of Jesus is showing us that Jesus is the same God who led his people out of Egypt. In doing this, rather than make direct statements or propositions21 or use direct quotes from the Old Testament, he draws his material about Jesus together mirroring the Exodus narrative using allusion and typology22. Mark expects that his readers will either have a deep understanding of the Exodus story or at least be prepared to dig deeper into the Jewish Scriptures to learn and therefore see the parallels he is drawing between Yahweh and Jesus23.

In the Exodus, God rescues his people from slavery in Egypt bringing them into the land he promised to give them. He rescues them keeping then safe from the final plague, the death of the first born, through the blood of a sacrificed lamb24. He demonstrates power over creation dividing the sea and providing a way through on dry ground, he defeats the armies of Pharaoh drowning them all as the waters return into their place, he speaks to Moses on the mountain, giving the law and drawing his people into covenant with himself, he leads them through the wilderness providing food for them to eat, then again provides them safe passage across the Jordan. In Mark all of these themes are touched upon showing that Jesus shared the same divine "DNA" as the LORD in the Old Testament:

Exodus	**Mark**
God's people were in the wilderness for 40 years as they journey from slavery in Egypt to the Promised Land (Exodus 16:35).	After his baptism, Jesus spends 40 days in the wilderness, being tempted by Satan (Mark 1:12-13).
God delivers the Israelites from the oppressive rule of Pharaoh drowning his army in the sea (Exodus 14)	Man set free from oppressive rule of Legion as the 1000s of demons as they are driven into pigs which are all drowned in the sea (Mark 5:1-13).
God provides manna from heaven to feed the Israelites in the wilderness (Exodus 16).	Jesus miraculously feeds the multitudes with loaves and fish, echoing God's provision in the wilderness (Mark 6:30-44, 8:1-10).
God's people are rescued by his power over the sea, providing safe passage at the beginning and end of their journey.	Jesus calms the storm (Mark 4:35-41) and walks on the water (Mark 6:45-52).

Moses receives the Law on Mount Sinai, encountering God in a powerful way on the mountain.	Jesus is transfigured, speaks to Moses on a mountain. The Father declaring from heaven, "This is my Son, listen to him" (Mark 9:2-4).
The covenant at Sinai establishes Israel as God's chosen people.	Jesus initiates the New Covenant at the last supper (Mark 14:22-25).
God initiates the tabernacle as the means through which people can be in relationship with God with sacrifice at the centre.	Through his death, the final sacrifice, the temple no longer required, the curtain is now torn in two (Mark 15:38).
Blood of the lamb shields the people from the last plague.	The Passover is now framed through his life given as a ransom (Mark 10:45), and now the celebration of his shed blood (Mark 14:22-25).

A couple of details in the Gospel bolster the idea that Mark is using the Old Testament to show us Jesus' divine identity. In chapter 6 where Jesus walks on the water, the disciples are in the boat, in verse 48 he goes out to them walking on the lake. At the end of verse 48 however, there is an intriguing phrase stating that he was "about to pass by them". We might just conclude that Jesus initially had different intentions, however the phrase in the Old Testament is loaded with meaning. When the LORD reveals himself to Moses in the book of Exodus, we are told that the Lord, said to be full of compassion and grace, "passed by" Moses (Exodus 33:22, Exodus 33:19 and Exodus 34:6). In the same way the Lord had revealed himself to Elijah, again by "passing by" (1 Kings 19:11). As we'll see below, Jesus also reveals himself to his disciples using the divine name as he is about to pass by.

There is also Old Testament precedence for thinking about the Messiah being framed in Exodus language. From Isaiah 40 the LORD speaks words of hope to his people that have a twofold message, first his people will return from exile, and there will be second greater return from exile through the coming of the Messiah (or servant as he is known). In that context, after he explicitly states that the LORD is the only God and Saviour (Isaiah 43:11), Isaiah looks forward to the Messiah's coming, first referring back to the Exodus, but then forward to future hope:

> *"This is what the Lord says—*
> *he who made a way through the sea,*
> *a path through the mighty waters,*
> *who drew out the chariots and horses,*
> *the army and reinforcements together,*
> *and they lay there, never to rise again,*
> *extinguished, snuffed out like a wick:*
> *"Forget the former things;*
> *do not dwell on the past.*
> *See, I am doing a new thing!*
> *Now it springs up; do you not perceive it?*
> *I am making a way in the wilderness*
> *and streams in the wasteland."*
>
> *What more appropriate way could there be for Mark therefore to frame the identity of Jesus and Lord and Saviour using the language of the Exodus?*
>
> *Also, while not from the Exodus narrative, Job 9:8-11 provides an important key to how we should understand the significance of Jesus walking on the water. There we are told that:*
>
> > *"[God] He alone stretches out the heavens*
> > *and treads on the waves of the sea …*
> > *When he passes me, I cannot see him;*
> > *when he goes by, I cannot perceive him.*
>
> *In his commentary on the book of Mark, James R. Edwards summarises this event as follows. "Jesus' walking on the water to his disciples is a revelation of the glory that he shares with the Father and the compassion that he extends to his followers. … In this respect Mark's Christology is no less sublime than is*

John's, although John has Jesus declaring that he is the Son of God (John 10:36), whereas Mark has him showing that he is the Son of God."25

4. Jesus' use of the title "Son of Man" shows he is divine

Alongside the use of Exodus typology, another clear way that we see Jesus' divine identity in Mark, is with Christ's use of the title "Son of Man" to refer to himself. It is generally thought that the title, "Son of God" refers to Jesus' divine identity and "son of man" is a reference to his earthly nature.

As we have seen, while in many instances in the New Testament, "Son of God" is a declaration of his divine identity, even in Mark26, it is also a title used for those in the Davidic line who were given authority from God to rule27. On the other hand, in Jewish thinking "son of man", rather than being a title of divinity or even a title at all, it was just a way to refer to a human being28. Interestingly Jesus very rarely identified himself as the "Son of God" in the Gospels. But far and away, Jesus preferred the title "Son of Man" when referring to himself29.

In the New Testament, "Son of Man" when used by Jesus has a very different meaning, than "just a man". It refers not to Jesus' earthly nature, but his deity and is rooted in Daniel 7. In this chapter, Daniel has a vision from God, saying:

> *"As I looked, "thrones were set in place,*
> *and the Ancient of Days took his seat.*
> *His clothing was as white as snow;*
> *the hair of his head was white like wool.*
> *His throne was flaming with fire,*
> *and its wheels were all ablaze. Daniel 7:9*
>
> *However, alongside the Ancient of Days he sees another figure being led into his presence:*
>
> > *"In my vision at night I looked, and there before me was one like a son of man, coming with the clouds of heaven. He approached the Ancient of Days and was led into his presence. He was given authority, glory and sovereign power; all nations and peoples of every language worshiped him. His dominion is an everlasting dominion that will not pass away, and his kingdom is one that will never be destroyed. Daniel 7:13-14*
> >
> > *From these last two verses we see that the "one like a son of man", is described in "God" language. He is said to be "coming on the clouds". Clouds being a frequent occurrence when God appears in the Old Testament30. He is given authority (note the multiple thrones in v9), glory and sovereign power. He has an everlasting kingdom and is someone who is worshiped by people from all nations. These things can only be true of one who is divine, yet Daniel describes as being in human form31.*
> >
> > *It is then no surprise when the Jewish authorities react in the way they do at the trial of Jesus when he answers their question, "Are you the Son of the Blessed One?" by saying, "And you will see the Son of Man sitting at the right hand of the Mighty One and coming on the clouds of heaven." (Mark 14:62) Their response is to tear their clothes and accuse him of blasphemy. (Mark 14:63).*
> >
> > *Before we look at Jesus' response in more detail, it is worth highlighting one potential Muslim objection to the title Son of Man referring to Jesus. In his debate with Douglas Jacoby, Shabir Ally, argues, that, "sometimes Jesus is speaking about himself with that title Son of Man, sometimes Jesus is speaking about another figure to come in the future", concluding, "so that great Son of Man who will come in the future in Mark's Gospel is not Jesus … it's somebody else because Jesus is always referring to that Son of Man in the third person"32.*
> >
> > *Firstly, it is true that whenever Jesus uses the title "Son of Man", he always uses it in the third person. However, it is also clear that the context in pretty much every occurrence forces us to*

conclude that he is claiming to be that Son of Man. So, in Mark 2:10 it is Jesus who is doing the forgiving, in Mark 2:28 it is Jesus who has authority to define how the Sabbath is used, in Mark 8:31 it is Jesus who will suffer, and because of the immediacy of the context, forces us to conclude that it's Jesus who will "come in his Father's glory" (Mark 8:38). It's Jesus who will rise from the dead (Mark 9:9) after his suffering (Mark 9:12, Mark 9:31, Mark 10:33), Jesus who will give his life as a ransom (Mark 10:45), Jesus who will be betrayed (Mark 14:21 and Mark 14:41) and Jesus answering the High Priest's question in the affirmative in Mark 14:62. The only reference to Son of Man that could possibly be ambiguous, is Mark 10:26, where Jesus says, "At that time people will see the Son of Man coming in clouds with great power and glory." However, the context forces us, especially considering every other use of Son of Man, to understand this too is referring to him, even more so when we compare with verse with Mark 14:62 – see below. If all other references to Son of Man are Jesus, why would this one be any different?

At the same time, referring to oneself in the 3rd person is actually a rhetorical device call an illeism and is common in the Bible33. An illeism is the act of referring to oneself in the third person instead of using first-person pronouns like "I" or "me". Exodus 4:5 is a good example, where God says to Moses, "'This,' said the Lord, 'is so that they may believe that the Lord, the God of their fathers—the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac and the God of Jacob—has appeared to you.'"34

It is also a device commonly used by Allah too in the Quran. In Quran 48.27 Allah states, "Certainly has Allah showed to His Messenger the vision in truth." If Jesus use of illeism precludes him from being the Son of Man, then we have to conclude that Allah's use of Allah precludes him from being Allah!

5. Jesus' use of the divine name, I AM shows he is the Lord himself

However, by far, one of the clearest references to Jesus' deity in Mark is where Jesus uses the personal name of God to refer to himself. In the Bible God is referred to by many titles. The most common title for God in the Old Testament is "Elohim", translated "God", but literally means "gods".35 So God is known as "Elohim" in Genesis 1:1, yet those "to whom the word of God came", as Jesus put it as said to be "Elohim" (gods). Adonai is also a common title for God, literary meaning "lords". When used the plural form it is almost exclusively used for God but is also used of others36. We have seen that "Son of God" while used to describe Jesus' deity, is also used of others, and in some contexts "son of man", just means a human being.

However, God's name, "YHWH", is never used of anyone in the Bible except God himself. When Moses was commanded to go to Egypt, he asked God's name, in case the Israelites asked him who had sent him. To this God replied to Moses, "I AM WHO I AM. This is what you are to say to the Israelites: 'I AM has sent me to you.'" Interestingly, when God gave his name to Moses, he gave it in the first person, "ehyeh"37, whereas when Moses and others (including God in other places) uses God's name, it is rendered in the third person, "Yahweh". The Greek rendering of "ehyeh" in the Septuagint38 is "ἐγώ εἰμι" (ego eimi)39.

Famously, Jesus in John Gospel refers to himself as "eyveh" in John 8:58 saying, "Before Abraham was, I AM", again the Greek for "I AM" being the Greek rendering of "eyvah", "ego eimi". This is an unmistakable declaration of Jesus to claim to be God. Gary Manning a professor of New Testament languages says:

> *What makes "I am" distinctive in God's declaration to Moses (Exod 3:14) is that it doesn't have a predicate nominative. (If you've forgotten your high school grammar, the predicate nominative is the second half of the sentence; for example, "I am the good shepherd.") … in John [John 6:19-20, John 8:58, John 18:6-8] … In each of these three, the context suggests that Jesus' deity is implied.40*

But, of course, if Shabir Ally is correct, this could easily be dismissed as a later embellishment of Christians wanting to show a far higher exalted Jesus than existed in reality. What better way to do this than to have Jesus using God's name for himself and have the Jewish leaders accuse him of blasphemy.

However, Jesus' use of "ego eimi" to refer to himself is not unique to John, it is found in Mark too, in more than one place.

In Mark 6, as we have seen, Mark shows us that Jesus is the God of the Exodus by drawing the connection between the feeding miracle and the walking on the water and the way God rescued his people out of Egypt. However, in Mark 6:5041 after the disciples cried out in fear thinking they had seen a ghost, Jesus says to them, "Take courage! It is I. Don't be afraid", before climbing in the boat and stilling the storm. The phrase rendered "It is I" in the English in the original Greek is that same phrase "ego eimi".

Commentators are clear that Jesus here is using the divine name, the wider context in particular giving weight to this understanding:

> *...in the context of all the other marks of divine epiphany, the phrase here must have the connotation of the divine self-revelation, the disclosure of the divine name as Yahweh, the one who says absolutely, "I am."42*
>
> > *As in the forgiveness of sins (2:10) and in his power over nature (4:39), walking on the lake identifies Jesus unmistakably with God. This identification is reinforced when Jesus says, "'Take courage! It is I.'" In Greek, "'It is I'" (egō eimi) is identical with God's self-disclosure to Moses.52 Thus Jesus not only walks in God's stead, but he also takes his name.43*
> >
> > *But it is in Mark 14:62, that we have Jesus arguably making one of the clearest claims to deity in the whole New Testament. In Mark 14, Jesus is arrested and stands on trial before the Sanhedrin. After unsuccessfully trying to frame him with false charges, the high priest gets to the heart of who Jesus is claiming to be:*
> >
> > > *the high priest asked him, "Are you the Messiah, the Son of the Blessed One?" "I am," said Jesus. "And you will see the Son of Man sitting at the right hand of the Mighty One and coming on the clouds of heaven." (Mark 14:61b-62)*
> > >
> > > *There are five ways that this verse unequivocally shows Jesus to be divine, right from the lips of Jesus himself. First, Jesus answers in the affirmative that he is "the Messiah, the Son of the Blessed One". We have seen that "son of God" as a title can be understood in many different ways, but what follows in Jesus' reply defines precisely what Jesus claims it means that he is the Son of God, i.e. God himself. Second, his use of "ego eimi" is another example of him using God's name. While it could be understood that Jesus is just only replying in the affirmative to the high priest's question, the wider context here and in Mark gives solid ground for understanding Jesus reply as a claim to be the I AM of exodus. Daniel Boyarin, comments:*
> > >
> > > > *When Jesus answers "I am," he is going even further than merely claiming messianic status, for "I Am," eigo eimi, is precisely what YHVH calls himself when Moses asks his name: "This is what you are to say to the Israelites, 'I am [eigo eimi] has sent me to you'" (Exodus 3:14). The high priest of the Jews could hardly be expected to miss this allusion. Jesus claims to be the Son of God, the Son of Man, and indeed God himself. A statement such as that is not merely true or false; it is truth or blasphemy.44*
> > > >
> > > > *Third, again unpacking what it means for Jesus to be the son of God, he quotes Psalms 110:1 claiming that he is "Adonai" (Lord) mentioned in the first verse of the Psalm. This is significant, not just that he claims to be Adonai (see also Mark 12:35-37), but that as*

such, he is seated in the highest place of authority conceivable, in fact the place that only God himself could be seated. In their book, "Putting Jesus in his place", Bowman and Komoszewski and state that, "In the religious and cultural milieu of Jesus' day, to claim to sit at God's right hand was tantamount to claiming equality with God."45

This is fourthly bolstered by the reference to the divine Son of Man in Daniel 7, which Jesus quotes kitted together with Psalms 110:1. The imagery in the Old Testament of one "coming on the clouds" is reserved for God alone46 and taken with the wider context of Daniel 7 describes the Son of Man as one who would have authority to judge. Bowman and Komoszewski conclude:

> *"Thus, when Jesus answers affirmatively that he is the Son of God and then immediately adds statements claiming to sit on God's throne at his right hand, exercising divine power in heaven, his response confirms that he is, indeed, claiming to be on the same level as God."*

Finaly however, it is the response of the high priest that constrains us to understand Jesus was claiming to be divine.

6. In Mark's Gospel Jesus possesses the qualities unique to God

The quotes above from Bowman and Komoszewski's book "Putting Jesus in his place " are from a wider work where they use the acronym, "H.A.N.D.S." to show the different ways that the Bible affirms the deity of Jesus. They point out that:

- *Jesus shares the Honour due only to God*
- *Jesus shares the Attributes of God*
- *Jesus shares the Names ascribed to God*
- *Jesus does the Deeds that only God can do*
- *Jesus is Seated on the throne of God.*

Rather than just use implicit references to Jesus' deity, like John 1:1, there are many implicit ways that the Bible shows us Who Jesus is.

We can show each of these concepts from MARK:

Honour: the Son of Man title, is a claim to being one who is worshiped. He should rightfully be served - Mark 10:45 – "did not come to serve", inferring that was his right, which he laid aside. Cf. Deuteronomy 6:13 Fear the Lord your God, serve him only and take your oaths in his name. He is the object of devotion as part of the Lord's supper (Mark 14:22).

Attributes: Eternal ("I have come/been sent" sayings – Mark 2:17, Mark 10:45, Mark 1:38. Voice from heaven, "this is my Son" Mark 1:11, Mark 9:7, also the "I AM" statements, cf. Mark 1:1 "Messiah" with OT passages like Mich 5:2), Omniscient (he knew what people were thinking Mark 2:6-8, he knew the details of the cross Mark 8:31-33 and who would betray him Mark 14:17-21, and the details of AD70, Mark 13:1-2)47. Omnipotent – (power over nature, the storm, demons, sickness and death, feeding miracles and walking on the water).

Names: Son of God (at his baptism Mark 1:11 and transfiguration Mark 9:2-8 – you are my Son), Son of Man (Mark 2:10, 8:31, 10:45, 14:62 – as we've seen a title of

divinity), He is the LORD (Mark 1:1-3) and the I AM (Mark 6:50, Mark 14:62), The Bridegroom (Mark 2:19 cf. Isaiah 54:5 and Isaiah 62:5), the Holy one of God (Mark 1:24, 3:11), King of the Jews (15:26), Messiah (see ch 8 – in the OT the Messiah is portrayed as divine: Micah 5:2, Psalms 45:6-7, Daniel 7:13-14, Zechariah 12:10, Psalms 110:1 – Jesus quotes this Psalm about himself). Miracles are done in his name (Mark 9:38-39), the disciples will be hated and persecuted for him namesake (Mark 13:13).

Deeds: Jesus forgives sins (Mark 2:10-12). Deeds that flow from his Omnipotence (power of nature, to cast out demons, heal, raise the dead) Shows God's mercy (Mark 5:19). He is saviour (cf. Isaiah 43:11). He has divine authority to dictate the law (Mark 3:4) and His words are eternal (Mark 13:31).

Throne: The is seen in the "Son of man" sayings especially in Mark 14:62 where he says "And you will see the Son of Man sitting at the right hand of the Mighty One and coming on the clouds of heaven" quoting Psalms 110:1 and Daniel 7:9 (see also Mark 8:38 and Mark 13:26), but seen too in the "I AM" statements (Mark 6:50 and Mark 14:62).

In conclusion, we have seen that Mark equates Jesus as the Son of God with being Yahweh himself, that he is God of the Exodus, that through the use of the title "Son of Man" he is the divine ruler and judge, that Jesus' use of the divine name, "I AM" shows he is the Lord himself and that Jesus possesses the qualities unique to God.

How Shabir Ally, Bart Erman or anyone could claim then that a divine Jesus is the result of Christian embellishment over time, is in itself a mystery!

References

1. *1 Christ is, the "image of the invisible God" (Colossians 1:15), "in Christ all the fullness of the Deity lives in bodily form" (Colossians 2:9), who is "in very nature God" (Philippians 2:5). Paul says, "we wait for the blessed hope—the appearing of the glory of our great God and Savior, Jesus Christ." (Titus 2:3) and that He "is God over all, forever praised! Amen." (Romans 9:5)*
2. *2 See https://ccistudyapp.com/a/the-66-books-of-the-bible-are-the-only--writings-inspired-by-god/*
3. *3 https://www.reasonablefaith.org/media/debates/the-concept-of-god-in--islam-and-christianity*
4. *4 "Ontological" means how someone exists in the being or nature rather than just a function they perform.*
5. *5 Is Jesus Prophet or Son Of God? - Douglas Jacoby vs Shabir Ally https://-youtu.be/quQCAcMCpes?si=n5EnaMqa4B_veaHZ&t=7101*
6. *6 A popular Muslim apologist based in London.*
7. *7 In the past Ehrman claimed that the synoptic Gospels, in no way show Jesus as divine. He does however, seem to have changed his position, stating that, "I was quite vehement, in person and in print, that the Synoptic Gospels did not portray Jesus as divine, but only the Gospel of John did … at the end of the day, I think it's easier to simply to say that these things are said of Jesus because the authors [of the synoptics] do think of him as in some sense and exalted divine being. It is not that he is equal with God (as in John), but that God has made him an exalted being, above a human character, divine." https://ehrmanblog.org/in-what-sense-is-jesus-god-in-matthew-mark-and--luke-my-change-of-mind/*
8. *8 https://conciliarpost.com/theology-spirituality/the-new-testament-in-order/*

9. *9 See for example https://www.alhakam.org/islamic-commentary-gospel--mark-part-i/*
10. *10 "The earliest belief about the order of the writing of the Gospels seems to be that Matthew was written first, followed by Mark, Luke, and John, in that order.12 But for over a century now, a majority of scholars have held that Mark came first." Can We Trust the Gospels? Peter J. Williams 2018*
11. *11 Sons of God were prominent in the Greco-Roman world, primarily as rulers, philosophers, poets, heroes, or miracle workers. (Edwards, 2020 p482)*
12. *12 Wayne Grudem says, "the title 'Son of God' when applied to Christ strongly affirms his deity as the eternal Son in the Trinity, one equal to God the Father in all his attributes." Grudem, Wayne A.. Bible Doctrine: Essential Teachings of the Christian Faith (p. 239). Zondervan. Kindle Edition*
13. *13 Of course, John's Gospel will show us in many places where that is the case, but here we shall constrain ourselves to Mark's Gospel.*
14. *14 This is the argument Jesus makes in John 10:34-36 arguing from the lesser to the greater...*
15. *15 See https://ccistudyapp.com/key-sources/the-bible/prophecies-about--christ/*
16. *16 https://www.equip.org/articles/the-gnostic-jesus/*
17. *17 Interestingly Bart Ehrman suggests that the inclusion of "Son of God" into v1 in later manuscripts, may have been in response to this view of Jesus that was later promoted in Gnostic teaching. See https://ehrmanblog.org/why--would-scribes-mess-with-marks-very-first-verse/.*
18. *18 See NIV Footnote.*
19. *19 https://www.ligonier.org/podcasts/simply-put/adonai*
20. *20 Paul will go on to make such a comparison in 1 Corinthians 8:6.*
21. *21 Like Jude 1:5 – see ESV*
22. *22 For a detailed discussion on the use of the Exodus in the New Testament and Mark's Gospel see, Otto Piper, "Unchanging Promises: Exodus in the New Testament," Interpretation 11 (1957), 19. and P Winch, "The Exodus Motif in the Gospel of Mark" https://etheses.dur.ac.uk/15182/1/WINCH001034934_2.-pdf?DDD32+*
23. *23 Many think Mark's audience is primarily gentile. Phrases such as (See P Winch, "The Exodus Motif in the Gospel of Mark" pages 12-13*
24. *24 The Quran fails to include this final 10th plague, mentioning only the first nine plagues. A plague of drought is mentioned in Quran 7.130, five others are in Quran 7.133, Quran 10.75-92 also reflects on the Exodus mentioning "signs" in general. See https://ccistudyapp.com/promises/musa/ for more.*
25. *25 Edwards, J. (2020) The Gospel According to Mark. Page 199*
26. *26 The voice from the Father at his baptism and transfiguration for example. According to Edwards, "Son of God", is, "Mark's blue chip title for Jesus, the chief artery of the Gospel."*
27. *27 Daniel Boyarin, the Jewish academic and historian notes, "When Mark in the very beginning of his Gospel writes, "The Beginning of the Gospel of Jesus Christ, the Son of God," the Son of God means the human Messiah, using the old title for the king of the House of David. When, on the other hand, Mark refers to him in the second chapter of the Gospel as the "Son of Man," he is pointing to the divine nature of the Christ." Boyarin, D. (2012) The Jewish Gospels.*
28. *28 Daniel Boyarin: "In those Semitic languages it is an ordinary word that means "human being" Boyarin, D. (2012) The Jewish Gospels.*
29. *29 "Son of Man", 15 times in Mark, "Son of God", many times by others (e.g. Mark, demons, the Father, the centurion), but by himself probably only 4*

times (Mark 12:6 in the parable, Mark 12:37, Mark 13:32, and affirmatively in response to the high priest in Mark 14:62).

30. *30 At Mount Sinai (Exodus 19:9, Exodus 19:16-20; Exodus 24:15-18), In the pillar of cloud as God led his people out of Egypt (Exodus 13:21-22; Exodus 14:19-24), At the Tabernacle (Exodus 33:9-10; Exodus 40:34-38), At Solomon's Temple (1 Kings 8:10-11; 2 Chronicles 5:13-14) and in Ezekiel's Vision (Ezekiel 1:4, Ezekiel 1:28; Ezekiel 10:3-4). Boyarin quoting J.a.Emerton says, ""The act of coming with clouds suggests a theophany of Yahwe himself. If Dan. vii. 13 does not refer to a divine being, then it is the only exception out of about seventy passages in the O[ld] T[estament]." Boyarin, D. (2012) The Jewish Gospels.*
31. *31 Boyarin argues that the idea of a Messiah being divine yet human may not have been an uncommon [among 1st century Jews] view because of their understanding of Daniel 7: "If all the Jews—or even a substantial number—expected that the Messiah would be divine as well as human, then the belief in Jesus as God is not the point of departure on which some new religion came into being but simply another variant (and not a deviant one) of Judaism." Boyarin, D. (2012) The Jewish Gospels.*
32. *32 https://youtu.be/quQCAcMCpes?si=lb9BA7HJ4OeKGQNH&t=2574*
33. *33 See https://repository.sbts.edu/bitstream/handle/10392/4954/Elledge_-sbts_0207D_10248.pdf?sequence=1&isAllowed=y for a detailed analysis of Illeism in the Bible.*
34. *34 See discussion below on God's name. "Yahweh" is from the root, "to be" and is a rendering in the third person, lit "he is".*
35. *35 See Psalms 82:6 cf. John 10:34*
36. *36 See Genesis 18:3 where Abrham calls the three visitors "adonai", and lot calls the two angels in Genesis 19:2 "adonai".*
37. *37 I AM WHO I AM is derived from the verb "to be" in Hebrew, literally, "ehyeh asher ehyeh", with "I AM" rendered, "Ehyeh" the verb "to be" in the first person.*
38. *38 Greek translation of the Hebrew Old Testament, known also as LXX.*
39. *39 https://biblebento.com/index.html?lxx1i&20.3.14*
40. *40 https://www.biola.edu/blogs/good-book-blog/2015/does-i-am-always-refer--to-god-in-the-gospel-of-john*
41. *41 Mark 6:45-50 is a parallel passage to John 6:19-20*
42. *42 Boring, E. (2006) Mark. Westminster John Knox Press. Note on Mark 6:47-51*
43. *43 Edwards, J. (2020) The Gospel According to Mark. p198*
44. *44 Boyarin, D. (2012) The Jewish Gospels. p138*
45. *45 Robert Bowman;J. Ed Komoszewski;Darrell L. Bock. Putting Jesus in His Place: The Case for the Deity of Christ (Kindle Location 2734). Kindle Edition.*
46. *46 See for example Exodus 14:20; Exodus 34:5; Numbers 10:34; Psalms 104:3 and Isaiah 19:1.*
47. *47 Of course we will need to answer Mark 13:32 - See: https://ccistudyapp.-com/a/did-jesus-know-the-hour-of-his-return/*