

5. Where did John baptize? _____

Describe the manner of New Testament baptism?

6. What did the heavenly voice say when Jesus was baptized?

What period followed Jesus' baptism? _____

Where was he? _____

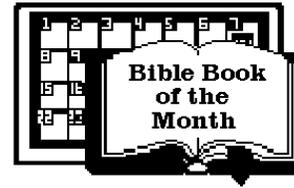
For how long? _____

MATCHING

- | | | |
|----------------|-------|------------------------|
| 1. Lord | _____ | Ate locust, wild honey |
| 2. River | _____ | Baptized of John |
| 3. Baptism | _____ | Tempted Jesus |
| 4. John | _____ | His way was prepared |
| 5. Holy Spirit | _____ | Voice came from there |
| 6. Jesus | _____ | Where John baptized |
| 7. Heaven | _____ | For remission of sins |
| 8. Satan | _____ | Jesus to baptize with |

THOUGHT QUESTIONS

- Why does Mark begin his account of the gospel at this point?
- Did those baptized of John confess they were sinners or that they were already saved?
- Can you think how the style, material and approach of Mark's gospel would be appropriate for the Roman audience?
- Why was Jesus baptized?
- Did Jesus have company in the wilderness?
- Is there any connection between John the Baptist and the sect of the Dead Sea Scrolls?



Mark

Lesson #1

The Servant's Coming

The Gospel of Mark is a wonderful book for busy people who are reading the Gospel for their very first time. It presents our Lord "on the move" serving, teaching, and working miracles. Mark pictures Jesus as the Miracle Working Servant of God who came not to be ministered unto but to minister — even to the point of giving his life for us on the cross.

Someone has said, "The Gospel is neither a discussion nor a debate, it is an announcement!" And Mark wastes no time in giving that announcement, for it is found in the opening words of his book.

(You can notice on the Background Study Sheet how Mark's Gospel fits in with that of Matthew, Luke and John.)

Mark 1:1-8 (The New King James Bible)

The beginning of the gospel of Jesus Christ, the Son of God. 2 As it is written in the Prophets:

"Behold, I send My messenger before Your face,

Who will prepare Your way before You."

3 "The voice of one crying in the wilderness:

'Prepare the way of the Lord; Make His paths straight.' "

4 John came baptizing in the wilderness and preaching a baptism of repentance for the

remission of sins. 5 Then all the land of Judea, and those from Jerusalem, went out to him and were all baptized by him in the Jordan River, confessing their sins. 6 Now John was clothed with camel's hair and with a leather belt around his waist, and he ate locusts and wild honey. 7 And he preached, saying, "There comes One after me who is mightier than I, whose sandal strap I am not worthy to stoop down and loose. 8 "I indeed baptized you with water, but He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit.

The Beginning of the Gospel

The word "gospel" simply means "the good news." It was the announcement of victories, royal visits, and wonderful special events. In the New Testament the "gospel of Jesus Christ" is the good news that God's Son has come into the world and died for our sins. It is the good

news that we can be forgiven and be made a part of God's family and one day live with God in heaven. It is the announcement of victory over sin, death and hell.

The Forerunner Identified by the Prophets — 1:2-3

Mark begins with the time when the "Good News" first began to be proclaimed by the ministry of John the Baptist. John's work in preparing the way for the coming of God's Son was itself a subject former prophets wrote about (Malachi 3:1; Isaiah 40:3).

The terms "messenger" and "voice" refer to John the Baptist as being sent by God to prepare the way for His Son (Matthew 3; Luke 3:1-18; John 1:19-34). In ancient times, before a king visited any part of his realm, a messenger was sent before him to prepare the way. This included both repairing the roads and preparing the people.

John prepared the way for the Lord by calling the nation to repentance and pointing them to Jesus as the Christ, the Lamb of God, sent to take away the sins of the world.

The Servant Identified by the Forerunner — 1:4-8

Jesus called John the greatest of the prophets (Matthew 11:7-13). The "wilderness" where John preached was the rugged wasteland along the western shore of the Dead Sea and the Jordan River. His food and dress was of the simplest fare. He was much like Elijah (2 Kings 1:8; Malachi 4:5; Luke 1:13-17).

John was careful to magnify Jesus and not himself. He baptized repentant sinners in water for the remission of sins. John himself did no miracles (John 10:41) but he said the One coming after him would baptize with the Holy Spirit (Acts 1:4-5).

The Servant Identified by the Father and the Spirit - 1:9-11

Mark tells of two witnesses who identified Jesus as the Christ to John the Baptist. When Jesus was baptized the Spirit came upon Him as a dove, and the Father spoke from heaven and identified His beloved Son.

It doesn't seem that this identification of Jesus by the Father was intended for the people's benefit, but for John and Jesus (John 1:29-34) so we're not sure if the people saw the dove or heard the voice from heaven. But it assured John so he could speak with divine authority.

The Servant's Preparation — 1:12 - 13

Mark doesn't give as full an account of the temptations as do Matthew and Luke. In saying that Jesus was "driven" by the spirit into the wilderness Mark shows the intensity of the experience. No time was spent basking in the glory of the heavenly voice. The Servant had a task before Him and He prepares for it.

Just as Moses was forty days on Mount Sinai, our Lord fasted forty days in the wilderness and met the temptations of Satan victoriously.

He is then ready to begin His mission of preaching the Gospel and training the twelve for world-wide evangelism.

OUTLINE of Studies for the Bible Book of the Month

- | | |
|-------------------------------|--------------|
| 1. The Servant's Coming | 1:1 - 13 |
| 2. The Servant's Work | 1:14 - 13:37 |
| 3. The Servant's Death | 14:1 - 15:46 |
| 4. The Servant's Resurrection | 16:1 - 20 |

Questions — I. The Servant's Coming — 1:1 - 13

1. What prophet is quoted in 1:27 _____ What did the voice in the wilderness cry? _____ Who was that voice? _____
2. What did John do? _____
What did he preach? _____
Who went to him?
1) _____
2) _____
3. Who in the Old Testament had a similar appearance to John and was forceful in his preaching as well?

4. How did John indicate the greatness of the one he was preparing the way for? _____
What two baptisms are mentioned? _____
