

22S35 Mark 1:1-13 (Part 1)

Hello everyone. Thank you for joining me today @ the PUNLA Coffee Table. I hope everyone is doing well. Today we are beginning our study of the gospel according to Mark with Mark 1:1-13 (Part 1) John the Baptist, the baptism of Jesus and the temptation of Jesus/

Before we start, we need to understand a little about this amazing book in the bible. Most historians believe Mark was the first written account of Jesus' life, ministry, death and resurrection. The identity of Mark is not known for sure but most believe this is John Mark. John Mark is spoken of by Luke in Acts as the cousin of Barnabas, John Mark is mentioned in many other books on the new testament. Many believe he spent time traveling with Peter, so it is thought that much of Mark's gospel is actually from the perspective of Peter. We also believe that John Mark knew Jesus. There are accounts that Jesus stayed at Mark's mother's home, there are also some unique story details in Mark that are not in either Matthew's or Luke's accounts. We will try to highlight some of these as we go through the stories in Mark.

I'm reading from the New American Standard version (NAS) today. But of course, you can use whatever translation you choose.

Let's read Mark 1:1-13 (NAS) *¹The beginning of the gospel of Jesus Christ, the Son of God, ²just as it is written in Isaiah the prophet: "BEHOLD, I AM SENDING MY MESSENGER BEFORE YOU, WHO WILL PREPARE YOUR WAY; ³THE VOICE OF ONE CALLING OUT IN THE WILDERNESS, 'PREPARE THE WAY OF THE LORD, MAKE HIS PATHS STRAIGHT!'" ⁴John the Baptist appeared in the wilderness, preaching a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins. ⁵And all the country of Judea was going out to him, and all the people of Jerusalem; and they were being baptized by him in the Jordan River, confessing their sins. ⁶John was clothed with camel's hair and wore a leather belt around his waist, and his diet was locusts and wild honey. ⁷And he was preaching, saying, "After me One is coming who is mightier than I, and I am not fit to bend down and untie the straps of His sandals. ⁸I baptized you with water; but He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit." ⁹In those days Jesus came from Nazareth in Galilee and was baptized by John in the Jordan. ¹⁰And immediately coming up out of the water, He saw the heavens opening, and the Spirit, like a dove, descending upon Him; ¹¹and a voice came from the heavens: "You are My beloved Son; in You I am well pleased." ¹²And immediately the Spirit *brought Him out into the wilderness. ¹³And He was in the wilderness for forty days, being tempted by Satan; and He was with the wild animals, and the angels were serving Him.*

Let's pray. Dear heavenly father, guide our discussion today such that your message is clear to each of us. As we read your words from Mark, help us see what Mark wants his readers to understand and why. I pray that you help me stay out of the way so your hope and peace can be shared with us. I pray this in your name Lord Jesus. Amen.

Now, let's take a closer look at these verses, Mark 1:1-3 (NAS) *¹The beginning of the gospel of Jesus Christ, the Son of God, ²just as it is written in Isaiah the prophet: "BEHOLD, I AM SENDING MY MESSENGER BEFORE YOU, WHO WILL PREPARE YOUR WAY; ³THE VOICE OF ONE CALLING OUT IN THE WILDERNESS, 'PREPARE THE WAY OF THE LORD, MAKE HIS PATHS STRAIGHT!'"* Mark immediately ties his gospel to the old testament. Specifically, Malachi 3 and Isaiah 40. God had told Israel Jesus was coming. But before Jesus was to come, first there would be a prophet. A voice in the wilderness. This was John the baptizer.

Let's read on, Mark 1:4-5 (NAS) *⁴John the Baptist appeared in the wilderness, preaching a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins. ⁵And all the country of Judea was going out to him, and all the people of Jerusalem; and they were being baptized by him in the Jordan River, confessing their sins.* Mark is telling us how important John the Baptist was. John was preparing the way for the Messiah. And people from all over came to John to be baptized because they knew they needed something. They knew they needed forgiveness.

Let's read on, Mark 1:6-8 (NAS), *⁶John was clothed with camel's hair and wore a leather belt around his waist, and his diet was locusts and wild honey. ⁷And he was preaching, saying, "After me One is coming who is mightier than I, and I am not fit to bend down and untie the straps of His sandals. ⁸I baptized you with water; but He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit."* The description of John is a little crazy. He wore coarse wool and ate bugs. Crazy but people came to John anyway. They knew something special was about to happen. I think many believe the Messiah was coming and John was fulfilling prophecy. But who was this one John kept saying was mightier than himself. And what was this baptism by the Holy Spirit.

Let's read on, Mark 1:9-11 (NAS), *"⁹In those days Jesus came from Nazareth in Galilee and was baptized by John in the Jordan. ¹⁰And immediately coming up out of the water, He saw the heavens opening, and the Spirit, like a dove, descending upon Him; ¹¹and a voice came from the heavens: "You are My beloved Son; in You I am well pleased."* John was predicting it and then Jesus arrived. I wonder what the people thought when they heard a voice from God. After Jesus was baptized, all three members of the trinity arrive at the same place. Jesus in the flesh, the Holy Spirit as a "like dove", and the voice of the almighty heavenly father. God the father, God the son and God the Holy Spirit. I'd be face down shaking with fear to see such an amazing moment. Three in one all at once.

Let's read on, Mark 1:12-13 (NAS), *¹²And immediately the Spirit *brought Him out into the wilderness. ¹³And He was in the wilderness for forty days, being tempted by Satan; and He was with the wild animals, and the angels were serving Him.* Mark does not give us as much detail as Matthew and Luke for these events. It's almost a summary. But even here in Mark it is clear that Jesus was tempted just like us. Matthew chapter 4 has more details about the temptation of Jesus. He was tempted in ways we can relate, physical needs like food, health, protection against harm, power and influence, and

pride and selfishness. But Jesus was not like us, Jesus was able to say no to all of these. And with the help of Jesus, we can say no to these temptations as well.

Let's review.

- 1) John the Baptist? We know from the other gospels, that John was a cousin to Jesus. They had probably met before, but John did not seem to know Jesus was the messiah until the day he baptized Jesus. People knew John was preparing them for something. The coming of the messiah.
- 2) Trinity? God the Father, God the Son and God the Holy Spirit. This is the one moment in the Bible story when all three persons of the trinity are present in the story at the very same moment.
- 3) Temptation? The evil one tempts all of us, with selfishness, pride, power, favoritism. The name devil means "the slanderer" and he is and does. Jesus was tempted the same way we are. He did not sin. So yes, we can resist the devil. But only with the help of Jesus. Jesus can help us to overcome the temptations of this world, so we can live better lives here and have eternal life with Jesus. When we feel the world tempting us, turn to Jesus for strength and overcome.

Let's Pray. Heavenly Father thank you for Bible. Help us to read and meditate on this letter so we can hear the message you have for us. Help us to remember who you are Lord. You are our king, king of kings. You are our Lord, Lord over everyone. We can trust you, Lord. Help us to ask you for wisdom when we don't understand. I pray this in your Name Lord Jesus. Amen

Let me leave you with this, Mark is introducing us to Jesus in Chapter 1. If anyone had a doubt about Jesus, you would think His baptism would have resolved it. But even John the Baptist begins to question if Jesus is really the Messiah later in our story. We are given all the evidence we need to believe in Jesus but even with all the evidence in the Bible, in nature and in other people, we still sometimes question. We question is Jesus really who He said He was. Let's find out together in this study of Mark. The Bible has been given to us so we can answer our questions. And yes, the Bible has been tested and tested and tested by critiques for hundreds of years. No one has ever proven the Bible to be invalid. In fact, despite all the challenges, none have proven to be able to disprove the Bible in any way. The more they try, the better the Bible looks compared to any other perspective. Now that is great news.

Thank you for joining me for our study of the gospel of Mark. Please email me comments or feedback. And if you liked the message, please share the link with your friends. Until next time @ the PUNLA Coffee Table. God bless.