

Mark Chapter 1

The author of Mark is probably the same Mark as John Mark that we read about (in Acts chapter 12).

Acts 12:12 "And when he had considered the thing, he came to the house of Mary the mother of John, whose surname was Mark; where many were gathered together."

This Mary, who was the mother of John Mark, lived in Jerusalem.

In Colossians 4:10, we see that Barnabas was a close relative, as well as an uncle. Mark was also, a close friend of Peter.

We see in Mark the working Jesus.

In Revelation, we read about the four beasts. We have said in our teaching on Revelation that a better interpretation would have been "living beings" for beasts.

Revelation 4:7 "And the first beast [was] like a lion, and the second beast like a calf, and the third beast had a face as a man, and the fourth beast [was] like a flying eagle."

As I said before, even though Matthew, that Mark, Luke, and John cover the same events in many cases. They are seen through four different people's eyes and are very different. The main topic of the book of Mark is: Jesus Christ, the servant of God and man.

In this book, we are not dealing with Jesus from the tribe of Judah; but Jesus Christ, the healer and servant. We see Jesus as the servant of man.

We see nineteen specific miracles in the book of Mark. Eight of these miracles deal with His power and authority over disease, five of these miracles show Jesus as having power over all the world and everything in it, four over demons and Satan, and two show His power over death.

As we go on through this book, take note that Jesus has power over all the earth, everything above the earth, everything under the earth, and everything in the sea. We will see Jesus as someone who gets the job done quickly. He sees a need and takes care of it right then.

John 14:11 "Believe me that I [am] in the Father, and the Father in me: or else believe me for the very works' sake."

If there is one theme, as I said, more than any other in Mark, it is "believe me for the very works' sake." We will get into all of this more as we go along.

Mark 1:1 "The beginning of the gospel of Jesus Christ, the Son of God;"

"The beginning ... the Son of God": This is best viewed as Mark's title for his gospel. The historical record of the gospel message began with John the Baptist (Matt. 11:12; Luke 16:16; Acts 1:22; 10:37; 13:24).

Mark begins with a burst of information that functions as a title. "The gospel" here refers not to the whole book but to the content of the early Christian proclamation, which in turn centers on a person. "Jesus" is His given name; "Christ" is both a name and His Old Testament title; "the Son of God" points to His unique familial intimacy with the God of the Old Testament.

“Jesus Christ”: “Jesus is the Greek form of the Hebrew name Joshua (“the Lord is salvation”); “Christ” (“Anointed One”), is the Greek equivalent of the Hebrew word Messiah. “Jesus” is the Lord’s human name (Matt. 1:21; Luke 1:31); “Christ” signifies His office as ruler of God’s coming kingdom (Dan. 9:25-26).

“Son of God”: An affirmation of Jesus’ deity, stressing His unique relationship to the Father (3:11; 5:7; 9:7; 13:32; 15:39; see note on John 1:34).

“Gospel”: The good news about the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ; of which the 4 gospels are written records.

We see here, in this first verse, that this is the beginning. There is no earlier writing by Mark. The gospel, as we said in Matthew, means good news. This is not just good news from anywhere, but is in fact, the good news of Jesus Christ.

We dealt with this name before, but I feel it is important to know what the name Jesus Christ implies, so bear with me, and we will get into it again. Jesus means The Savior, and Christ means the Anointed One. We discussed in a previous lesson that one of Jesus’ names, before He came to earth, was God the Word.

John 1:1 "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God."

We also read in 1 John 5:7 "For there are three that bear record in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost: and these three are one."

You see, in heaven the one we call Jesus Christ is known as the Word. He took the name Jesus Christ for His earthly stay in a human body so that He, The Anointed One, might become the Savior of the world. For His stay on earth, He was also known as the Son of God.

Jesus had no earthly Father. His Father was God. We touched on this in Matthew. The Holy Spirit hovered over Mary, and she became pregnant by the Holy Spirit. Jesus was the Spirit of God in fleshly form; and thus the Son of God.

Verses 2-3: By “prophets,” Mark means the so-called major and minor prophets of the Old Testament, specifically Malachi and Isaiah. Because early Christians had a great reverence for Scripture, and had only the Old Testament for their bible, passages foretelling Jesus’ coming are regarded as strong proof of His divine identity. These prophecies relate especially to John’s activity.

Mark 1:2 "As it is written in the prophets, Behold, I send my messenger before thy face, which shall prepare thy way before thee."

“It is written”: A phrase commonly used in the New Testament to introduce Old Testament quotes (7:6; 9:13; 14:21, 27; Matt. 2:5; 4:4, 6-7; Luke 2:23; 3:4; John 6:45; 12:14; Acts 1:20; 7:42; Romans 3:4; 8:36; 1 Cor. 1:31; 9:9; Gal. 3:10; 4:22; Heb. 10:7; 1 Peter 1:16).

“In Isaiah the prophet”: Mark’s quote is from two Old Testament passages (Isa. 40:3; Mal. 3:1), which probably explains the reading “the Prophets” found in some manuscripts. The gospels all introduce John the Baptist’s ministry by quoting (Isa. 40:3; Matt. 3:3; Luke 3:4; John 1:23)

“My messenger”: John was the divinely promised messenger, set to prepare the way for the Messiah. In ancient times, a king’s envoys would travel ahead of him making sure the roads were safe and fit for him to travel on, as well as announcing his arrival.

We could go through and list the prophecies in the Old Testament. The prophecies of Jesus Christ began in Genesis chapter 3 verse 15 and went through most of the books in the Old Testament.

The greatest number were in the books of the prophets such as: (Isaiah 9:7; 7:14; Micah 5:12; Daniel 9:25; Jeremiah 31:15; Deuteronomy 18:15; Psalms 110:4; Zechariah 9:9 or Zechariah 11:12). There are many more, too numerous to mention. In fact, that is a study just in itself.

The specific prophet meant above however, was Malachi. The Scripture which confirms this is:

Malachi 3:1 "Behold, I will send my messenger, and he shall prepare the way before me: and the Lord, whom ye seek, shall suddenly come to his temple, even the messenger of the covenant, whom ye delight in: behold, he shall come, saith the LORD of hosts."

In (Matthew 17:12”, we see that Jesus said that John the Baptist was the messenger spoken of. This messenger's job was not to elevate himself, but to prepare the way for Jesus Christ, the Savior of the world.

Mark 1:3 "The voice of one crying in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make his paths straight."

John the Baptist was born and lived for one purpose, and that was to proclaim the coming of Christ. He had one message. It was Repent and be baptized for the Lord is coming. God, throughout the Bible, picked out a specific person and called them to do a specific job for Him. This was what God called John the Baptist to do. He was to use his voice to proclaim the coming of the Lord.

We see many others in the Bible chosen by God for a specific job such as Moses to lead the children of Israel out of Egypt to the Promised Land. He called Noah to build an ark. You see, God chooses whomever He will. This wilderness was not just physical, but spiritual as well. Our cry, like John the Baptist's cry, should be "The Lord is coming".

Mark 1:4 "John did baptize in the wilderness, and preach the baptism of repentance for the remission of sins."

“John”: a common Jewish name in New Testament times, it is the Greek equivalent of the Hebrew name “Johanan” (2 Kings 25:23; 1 Chron. 3:15; Jer. 40:8), meaning “the Lord is gracious.” John’s name was given by the angel Gabriel to his father Zacharias, during his time of priestly service in the temple (Luke 1:13).

His mother, Elizabeth, also a descendant of Aaron (Luke 1:5), was a relative of Mary the mother of Jesus (Luke 1:36).

As the last Old Testament prophet and the divinely ordained forerunner of the Messiah, John was the culmination of Old Testament history and prophecy (Luke 16:16), as well as the beginning of the historical record of the gospel of Jesus Christ. Not surprisingly, Jesus designated John as the greatest man who had lived until his time (Matt. 1:11).

“John” (the Baptist), breaks a centuries-long prophetic silence in Israel. Other Jewish groups practiced ritual water cleansing, but John called all Israel to “repentance” (verse 5).

“Baptism”: Being the distinctive mark of John’s ministry, his baptism differed from the ritual Jewish washings in that it was a one-time act. The Jews performed a similar one-time washing of Gentile proselytes, symbolizing their embracing of the true faith.

That Jews would participate in such a rite was a startling admission that they, although members of God’s covenant people, needed to come to God through repentance and faith just like Gentiles.

“In the wilderness”: The desolate, arid region between Jerusalem and the Dead Sea (see note on Matt. 3:1).

“Baptism of repentance”: A baptism resulting from true repentance. John’s ministry was to call Israel to repentance in preparation for the coming of Messiah. Baptism did not produce repentance, but was its result (Matt. 3:7-8). Far more than a mere change of mind or remorse, repentance involves a turning from sin to God (1 Thess. 1:9), which results in righteous living.

Genuine repentance is a work of God in the human heart (Acts 11:18). For a discussion of the nature of repentance, see notes on (2 Cor. 7:9-12).

“For the remission of sins”: John’s rite of baptism did not produce forgiveness of sin (see notes on Acts 2:38; 22:16); it was only the outward confession and illustration of the true repentance that results in forgiveness (Luke 24:47; Acts 3:19; 5:31; 2 Cor. 7:10).

John’s baptism was not regarded as equal to baptism in the name of the Trinity as a testimony to one’s personal trust in Christ. (See Acts 19:1-5). “For” here means “with a view to,” that is, in order to attain “remission of sins.” The Greek word order shows that it is not baptism but repentance that secures remission of sins.

We have discussed in our lessons on Matthew, that it was the custom to baptize for the remission of sins long before Jesus’ crucifixion on the cross. Even in the tabernacle in the wilderness, the washings were symbolic of baptism to wash away sins. This actually was different to the baptism we Christians do.

A Christian being baptized is actually performing Jesus’ burial and resurrection. We are baptized into a water grave, and we are following Jesus in His resurrection. We rise again to newness of life in Jesus.

Mark 1:5 "And there went out unto him all the land of Judea, and they of Jerusalem, and were all baptized of him in the river of Jordan, confessing their sins."

“All the land of Judea ... and they of Jerusalem”: After centuries without a prophetic voice in Israel (Malachi had prophesied more than 400 years earlier), John’s ministry generated an intense amount of interest.

“Judea”: The southernmost division of Palestine (Samaria and Galilee being the others), in Jesus’ day. It extended from about Bethel in the North to Beersheba in the South, and from the Mediterranean Sea in the West to the Dead Sea and Jordan River in the East. Included within Judea was the city of Jerusalem.

“River of Jordan”: Palestine’s major river, flowing through the Jordan Rift Valley from Lake Hula (drained in modern times), North of the Sea of Galilee, South to the Dead Sea. According to tradition, John began his baptizing ministry at the fords near Jericho.

“Confessing”: To confess one’s sins, as they were being baptized, is to agree with God about them. John baptized no one who did not confess and repent of his sins.

The whole of Judea and Jerusalem is rocked by John's presence. The tense of "baptized" stresses that it took place continually over a length of time. The condition for baptism was a public response, by which and in which one confessed his sins.

There, strangely enough, was no rejection by the people of John the Baptist. We see here, that many people went to great trouble to go into the wilderness and be baptized by John in the River Jordan. In (Matthew 21:26), we see that the people believe John to be a true prophet.

Matthew 21:26 "But if we shall say, Of men; we fear the people; for all hold John as a prophet."

Isn't it strange they believed he was a prophet and did not believe the message he brought that Jesus Christ is Messiah? This river Jordan is still a favorite place for Christians worldwide to be baptized.

Mark 1:6 "And John was clothed with camel's hair, and with a girdle of a skin about his loins; and he did eat locusts and wild honey;"

"Camel's hair ... girdle of a skin": The traditional clothes of a wilderness dweller which were sturdy, but neither fashionable nor comfortable. John's clothing would have reminded his audience of Elijah (2 Kings 1:8), whom they expected to come before Messiah (Mal. 2:5; Matthew 17:10-13).

"Locusts and wild honey": The Old Testament dietary regulations permitted the eating of "locusts" (Lev. 11:2-22). "Wild honey" could often be found in the wilderness (Deut. 32:13; 1 Samuel 14:25-27). John's austere diet was in keeping with his status as a lifelong Nazirite (Luke 1:15).

John's appearance is reminiscent of Elijah (2 Kings 1:8; Mark 6:15).

We can see from this that John the Baptist was a simple man with simple needs. The Bible says those that wear fine clothes live in palaces. John did not live in a palace, but rather in the wilderness.

In a land where there are many camels, it would not have been expensive to get a camel's hide to make a garment from. A "girdle", we learned in Exodus, is something similar to a very wide belt. In all of this, I say again, we see a simple man with simple needs, setting out to carry out the job that God had called him to fulfill.

Mark 1:7 "And preached, saying, There cometh one mightier than I after me, the latchet of whose shoes I am not worthy to stoop down and unloose."

"Preached, saying" denotes a continuous activity. This is John's characteristic message. Better translated: "proclaiming." John was Jesus' herald, sent to announce His coming (see note on verse 4).

"Latchet" refers to the thong of a sandal. John is concerned to make clear both his inferiority (so as not to distract from the future-oriented focus of his message), and the Coming One's superiority (so as to cultivate longing and expectancy).

"The latchet of whose shoes I am not worthy to stoop down and unloose": The most menial task a slave could perform. John vividly expressed his humility.

We see here, a humble man. John the Baptist knew that he was nothing compared to Jesus. Our ministers of today could take a lesson from John. We are nothing but a voice fulfilling the ministry that God has called us to. The person of the preacher is not the important thing. The message is the important thing, for by the foolishness of preaching people are saved.

As John the Baptist elevated Jesus to His rightful position as God manifest in the flesh, so should every follower of Jesus and especially the ministers of His Word. Get our minds and messages off of mortal men and onto the mighty God, Jesus Christ our Lord. At the presence of the Lord, every knee will bow as John did.

Philippians 2:10-11 "That at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of [things] in heaven, and [things] in earth, and [things] under the earth;" "And [that] every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ [is] Lord, to the glory of God the Father."

We must all remember with John that we are not worthy to unloose His shoes.

Mark 1:8 "I indeed have baptized you with water: but he shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost."

"I" and "he" are emphatic, stressing the contrast. John has a vital function, but Jesus has an even greater one. As John was used by God to administer immersion in water, Jesus will serve to bring men under the influence of the Holy Spirit.

"Baptized you with the Holy Ghost": This takes place when a person comes to faith in Christ (see notes on Acts 1:5; 8:16-17; 1 Cor. 12:13).

You can easily see from this that the baptism of repentance, which John the Baptist baptized with, was not the same baptism. John's baptism is of water, and Jesus' baptism is of fire of the Holy Ghost.

Luke 3:16 "John answered, saying unto [them] all, I indeed baptize you with water; but one mightier than I cometh, the latchet of whose shoes I am not worthy to unloose: he shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost and with fire:"

We see the explanation of this baptism (in Acts 19:2-6).

"He said unto them, Have ye received the Holy Ghost since ye believed? And they said unto him, We have not so much as heard whether there be any Holy Ghost." "And he said unto them, Unto what then were ye baptized? And they said, Unto John's baptism." "Then said Paul, John verily baptized with the baptism of repentance, saying unto the people, that they should believe on him which should come after him, that is, on Christ Jesus." "When they heard [this], they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus." "And when Paul had laid [his] hands upon them, the Holy Ghost came on them; and they spake with tongues, and prophesied."

Mark Chapter 1 Questions

1. Why would we do this Bible study, if it covers many of the same events as Matthew?
2. Who is the author of Mark?
3. Who was his mother?
4. What was Mark's full name?
5. Give his uncle's name?
6. Who was a close friend to Mark?
7. What does Mark show us about Jesus?

8. The main topic of the book of Mark is what?
9. In Mark, we are not dealing with Jesus from the tribe of Judah, but Jesus the what?
10. How many major miracles are listed in Mark?
11. How many deal with disease?
12. How many deal with Jesus' power and authority over the world?
13. How many show His power over demons and even Satan?
14. How many show His power over death?
15. How does Jesus get the job done (in one word)?
16. If there is a theme in Mark, it is found in John chapter 14 verse 11. What is it?
17. Gospel means what?
18. What does the word Jesus mean?
19. What does the word Christ mean?
20. What was Jesus' name in heaven that we read in John chapter 1 and First John 5:7?
21. How was it possible for His (Jesus) Father to be God? Explain.
22. In the Old Testament, where were the most prophecies of Jesus? Name a few.
23. Covering verse 2 in Mark, which one specifically was intended, perhaps?
24. In Matthew 17:12, what were we told about this messenger?
25. What was the purpose of John the Baptist's life?
26. What was his message?
27. Name two other men in the Bible who were called of God to do a specific job?
28. What was John's baptism of?
29. Was it practiced before Jesus was crucified?
30. How does this baptism in water differ from the baptism of us, Christians?
31. What is strange about the ministry of John the Baptist?
32. Where do we find the Scripture that the people believed John to be a true prophet?
33. How was John clothed?

34. What was he eating?
35. What is a girdle?
36. What was the locust, really?
37. In all of this, we see a _____ man, with _____ needs, setting out to do what?
38. How did John the Baptist compare himself to Jesus?
39. The person of the preacher is not the important thing. What is the important thing?
40. We should get our minds and our messages off of what and onto what?
41. Philippians 2:10 tells us what?
42. John baptized with water, but Jesus baptizes with what?
43. Where was the word fire added to this?
44. In chapter 19 of Acts, what do we see clearly about the baptism of the Holy Ghost?
45. What was the only comment the author made about this?

Mark Chapter 1 Continued

Mark 1:9 "And it came to pass in those days, that Jesus came from Nazareth of Galilee, and was baptized of John in Jordan."

“In those days”: At some unspecified time during John’s baptizing ministry at the Jordan.

“Nazareth”: An obscure village (not mentioned in the Old Testament, or by Josephus, or in the Talmud), about 70 miles North of Jerusalem, that did not enjoy a favorable reputation (John 1:46). Jesus had apparently been living there before His public appearance to Israel.

“Baptized of John in Jordan”: Over John’s objections (Matt. 3:14), who saw no need for the sinless Lamb of God (John 1:29), to participate in a baptism of repentance (see notes on verses 4-5); for an explanation of why Jesus was baptized (see note on Matt. 3:15).

Jesus did not need to repent of sin, but as the Messiah of Israel He identified thoroughly with the people of Israel. He also would have wished to show His support for John as God’s prophet. Jesus sought this outward identification with John’s ministry “to fulfill all righteousness”. By identifying Himself with those He came to redeem, Jesus inaugurated His public ministry as the Messiah.

To some people this would seem so unusual that the Savior of the world would come to be baptized. Of course, Jesus had no sins to repent of. He was without sin. In everything, Jesus is the ultimate example. I believe this act of humbly coming to be baptized was simply an example for us to follow.

There had been very little heard of Jesus, since His trip with Mary and Joseph to Jerusalem when He was twelve years old. We know that He lived with His mother Mary, and Joseph, the man that the world thought was His father. Joseph was a carpenter, and Jesus had worked with Joseph in the carpenter's shop.

I believe a great deal went on that we are not told about in the Scriptures in this interval, since He had been in the temple at twelve.

The statement: "wist ye not that I must be about my Father's business?" found (in Luke 2:49), tells us that Jesus had begun His heavenly Father's business.

The fact that Mary knew that Jesus could turn water into wine at the wedding indicates to me that this was the first recorded miracle, not the first one. Jesus from the time He was twelve until the wine incident was possibly ministering, but not formally for recorded history. The Hebrew young men called to the ministry began at age thirty.

John the Baptist was a close relative of Jesus' mother, Mary. It seems that John's message had traveled far, and Nazareth was not far from the Jordan River. Jesus in prophecy, would be known as a Nazarene and a Galilean. It is so simply stated here that Jesus was baptized of John. The baptizer is not the important thing, the baptism is.

Mark 1:10 "And straightway coming up out of the water, he saw the heavens opened, and the Spirit like a dove descending upon him:

“Straightway”: In keeping with His fast-paced narrative style, Mark used this adverb more than the other 3 gospel writers combined. This first occurrence sets the stage for the audible and visible signs that followed Jesus’ baptism.

“The Spirit like a dove descending upon him”: This was most likely symbolic of Jesus’ empowerment for ministry (Isa. 61:1; see note on Matt. 3:16-17).

Mark uses a somewhat violent verb in Greek; “opened” can be rendered “being torn apart.” Jesus witnesses heaven, closed to sinners, being torn open. This signifies that God is now accessible to penitent seekers. God’s “Spirit” empowers Jesus for His coming service.

Mark 1:11 "And there came a voice from heaven, [saying], Thou art my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased."

Along with new access to heaven (verse 10), comes new information from heaven. “Thou are” is a statement of fact. Thou is translated from an emphatic Greek personal pronoun stressing the identity of Jesus to the exclusion of all others. The force of this is, “You alone, rather than any others, are uniquely My beloved Son.”

The Father’s pronouncement would have reminded the audience of the messianic prophecies of (Psalm 2:7; Isa. 42:1).

The thing that stands out (in verses 10 and 11), more than anything else is the fullness of the God head here. We see Jesus (the second person), coming out of the water, we see the Father in the voice from heaven, and we see the Holy Spirit in the form of a Dove which descended from heaven. We in fact, see Father, Son, and Holy Spirit here at the baptism.

The heaven opened lets us know that these truly were from the throne of God in heaven. Remember, Jesus was from heaven Himself. His Spirit, which is His Life, is of God. His flesh was provided by Mary.

In (verse 10), it appears that all three personalities of God were cooperating in the ministry of Jesus here on the earth. Jesus' body here, was touched by the Holy Spirit of God, as if anointing Jesus to carry out the work. Jesus' Spirit needed no renewal. His Spirit is the God Spirit, without flaw.

The Spirit of God chose to come to earth and take on the form of man, so that He might save mortal man. The "heavens opened" shows also, the involvement of all of heaven in this earthly ministry of Jesus which officially began with this baptism. The Elohim God was present here, the very one present at creation.

These three also, give us a three-fold view of approval of the baptism. First of all, the Lord Jesus was the one baptized. The voice from heaven caused us to hear God's approval; and thirdly, the dissention of the Dove gave physical evidence of God's approval.

Many people wear little dove pins proclaiming that they have been baptized in the Holy Spirit. This voice leaves no doubt who Jesus is. He is the Son of God. Not only is He the Son of God, but God is very pleased with His Son. Just this voice alone should have left no doubt in anyone's mind just who Jesus really is.

Mark 1:12 "And immediately the Spirit driveth him into the wilderness."

“Immediately” (see note on verse 10). Jesus’ temptation came right after His baptism.

“The Spirit driveth him”: Compelled by the Spirit, Jesus confronted Satan and took the first step toward overthrowing his evil kingdom (1 John 3:8). Though God tempts no one (James 1:13), He sometimes sovereignly permits Satan to tempt His people (e.g. Job; Luke 22:31-32).

The verb “driveth” calls attention to the forcefulness of the Spirit’s urging. The “wilderness” is the desert waste of Palestine.

“The wilderness”: The exact location of Jesus’ encounter with Satan is unknown. It most likely would have been the same wilderness where John lived and ministered (see note on verse 4), the desolate region farther South, or the arid Arabian desert across the Jordan.

Mark 1:13 "And he was there in the wilderness forty days, tempted of Satan; and was with the wild beasts; and the angels ministered unto him."

“Forty days”: Perhaps reminiscent of Israel’s 40 years of wandering in the wilderness (Num. 14:33; 32:13). Matthew and Luke add that Jesus went without food during this time. Moses (twice, Deut. 9:9, 18) and Elijah (1 Kings 19:8) also fasted for that length of time.

“Satan”: From a Hebrew word meaning “adversary.” Since He had no fallen nature, Jesus’ temptation was not an internal emotional or psychological struggle, but an external attack by a personal being.

“Wild beasts”: A detail unique to Mark’s account, stressing Jesus’ loneliness and complete isolation from other people.

The temptation is portrayed as lasting throughout the “forty days.” But so is the sustaining ministration of God’s angels. “Wild beasts” underscores the loneliness and hostility of the surroundings.

Here in Mark we see a very short statement. This is covered in detail (in Matthew 4:1-11), and again (in Luke 4:1-13). I would suggest that you read both of those accounts several times along with this to get the full message. I will touch on just one or two items here.

"The Spirit driveth him into the wilderness" is a shortened statement. The true meaning, I believe, is found in Luke:

Luke 4:1 "And Jesus being full of the Holy Ghost returned from Jordan, and was led by the Spirit into the wilderness,"

We see a similar statement (in Matthew 4:1), "Then was Jesus led up of the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted of the devil."

We see here, a perfect example of cross references of Scriptures which interpret themselves. We see from this, that Jesus was so full of the Holy Ghost and its power, that He was led by the Spirit. It is one thing, I have said before, to be saved; but it is an entirely different thing to have Jesus as your Lord.

Jesus in this case, had totally submitted His will to the Spirit. He gladly went to be tempted of the devil. God is not a tempter. The devil tempts through the lust of the flesh. When we are tempted, it is the lust of the flesh that causes the temptation. In Jesus' case, He had no lust. The devil tried to cause Jesus to lust for the things of this world and failed.

Another point we must make here, is that the angels of God did not minister unto Jesus, until He had been tempted and overcame the temptation. Then they ministered to Jesus (Psalm 91:11-12). The tense of the Greek verb, “to minister,” suggests the angels ministered to Jesus throughout His temptation.

Forty throughout the Bible, is symbolic of trials and testings. These forty days were no exception. We will find in our Christian walk that we too, have times of testing. We too must withstand the devil with the Word of God and in the name of Jesus.

In (James 4:7), we read "Submit yourselves therefore to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you."

Jesus was tempted in all ways as we are. He was first tempted in food, because He was hungry after forty days. He was tempted to tempt God and see if God would protect Him, and He was tempted to attain earthly fame. To read more in detail about this, you may read in the lessons on Matthew and Luke which deal with this same subject (in chapter 4), of both books.

Mark 1:14 "Now after that John was put in prison, Jesus came into Galilee, preaching the gospel of the kingdom of God,"

“John was put into prison”; He was incarcerated for rebuking Herod Antipas over his incestuous marriage to his niece, Herodias (see notes on 6:17-27).

“Jesus came into Galilee”: From Judea (Matt. 4:12; Luke 4:13; John 4:3). Mark, along with Matthew and Luke, passes directly from the temptation to the beginning of the Galilean ministry, skipping Jesus’ intervening ministry in Judea (John 2:13 – 4:4). Galilee was the northernmost region of Palestine, and the most heavily populated.

“The gospel of the kingdom of God”: The good news of salvation both about God and from Him (see note on Rom. 1:1; Rom. 15:16; 1 Thess. 2:2, 8-9; 1 Tim. 1:11, 1 Peter 4:17).

Jesus’ public ministry in “Galilee” gets underway.

Mark 1:15 "And saying, The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand: repent ye, and believe the gospel."

“The time is fulfilled”: Not time in a chronological sense, but the time for decisive action on God’s part. With the arrival of the King, a new era in God’s dealings with men had come (see note on Gal. 4:4).

“At hand”: Because the King was present.

“Repent ye, and believe”: Repentance (see note on verse 4), and faith (see note on Romans 1:16), are man’s required responses to God’s gracious offer of salvation (Acts chapters 20-21).

Jesus’ proclamation stresses the importance of that present time. The sphere of God’s sovereign rule is extending into humanity with new intensity. All, even Israel, are to repent by God’s grace, turning from sin and to righteousness, not just outwardly but with the heart.

Along with repenting must come believing, putting trust in Jesus’ message (and thus right from the start, to some extent, in Jesus Himself).

There was a gap of time here between the temptation and the time Jesus came into Galilee. This John spoken of here, is John the Baptist. He was imprisoned because he spoke out against Herod marrying his sister-in-law, Herodias. This is found (in Mark 6:18-19).

When Jesus came into any area, it was for a purpose. Here we see Him coming into Galilee, to preach the gospel of the kingdom of God. The purpose of preaching is to change people, to cause them to begin again in Jesus. The "gospel" as we have said before, is good news. Believers are not like the world that has no hope. We have hope of an everlasting kingdom, if we believe in Jesus.

The kingdom of God is actually everything that exists. The whole universe is His kingdom. A really good way to say this would be that Jesus was preaching the good news that God is King of everything. And we are part of that kingdom, if we repent of our sins and make Jesus Christ Savior and Lord of our lives.

In (verse 15), "the time is fulfilled", just means that the fulfillment of the Old Testament prophecies that Messiah will come, had happened. Jesus fulfilled these prophecies. Christians should not dread death of the body; we should look forward to the everlasting life of the Spirit.

Romans 10:9 tells us what this good news really is:

Romans 10:9 "That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved.

Mark 1:16 "Now as he walked by the sea of Galilee, he saw Simon and Andrew his brother casting a net into the sea: for they were fishers."

“Sea of Galilee”: Also known as the Sea of Chinnereth (Num. 34:11), the Lake of Gennesaret (Luke 5:1), and the Sea of Tiberias (John 6:1). A large, freshwater lake about 13 miles long and 7 miles wide, and about 690 feet below sea level (making it the lowest body of fresh water on earth) “The Sea of Galilee” was home to a thriving fishing industry.

“Simon and Andrew”: The first of two sets of brothers Jesus called to follow Him. Like James and John, they were fishermen. Since Andrew had been a follower of John the Baptist (John 1:40), it is possible that Peter had been as well.

They had evidently returned to their fishing business after John’s arrest (see note on verse 14). They had already met and spent time with Jesus (see note on Matt. 4:18), but were here called to follow Him permanently.

“Net”: A rope forming a circle about 9 feet in diameter with a net attached. It could be thrown by hand into the water, then hauled in by means of the length of weighted rope attached to it.

Mark 1:17 "And Jesus said unto them, Come ye after me, and I will make you to become fishers of men."

“Come ye after me” (or follow me): Used frequently in the gospels in reference to discipleship (2:18; 8:34; 10:21; Matt. 4:19; 8:22; 9:9; 10:38; 16:24; 19:21; Luke 9:23, 59, 61; 18:22; John 1:43; 10:27; 12:26).

“Fishers of men”: Evangelism was the primary purpose for which Jesus called the apostles, and it remains the central mission for His people (Matt. 28:19-20; Acts 1:8).

With a command Jesus summons two to be disciples. Mark may preserve here Peter’s vivid memory of this brief and direct appeal. Seen against its Old Testament background, Jesus’ call is to the task of winning men in view of the impending judgment of God.

Verses 18-20: Jesus’ call is not an enthusiastic shout of temporary appeal but a summons to all-encompassing, whole-life commitment. Jesus gains at least four dedicated adherents, who follow him to Capernaum.

Mark 1:18 "And straightway they forsook their nets, and followed him."

“Followed him”: I.e., became His permanent disciples (see note on verse 16).

This again, is a very short and precise statement about the call of Simon (Peter), and Andrew to go with Jesus and be His apostles. We find this statement almost exactly like this (in Matthew 4:18-22). The most vivid description of what happened however, is found in:

Luke 5:1-4 "And it came to pass, that, as the people pressed upon him to hear the word of God, he stood by the lake of Gennesaret," "And saw two ships standing by the lake: but the fishermen were gone out of them, and were washing [their] nets." "And he entered into one of the ships, which was Simon's, and prayed him that he would thrust out a little from the land. And he sat down, and taught the people out of the ship." "Now when he had left speaking, he said unto Simon, Launch out into the deep, and let down your nets for a draught."

Luke 5:5-11 "And Simon answering said unto him, Master, we have toiled all the night, and have taken nothing: nevertheless at thy word I will let down the net." "And when they had this done, they inclosed a great multitude of fishes: and their net brake." And they beckoned unto [their] partners, which were in the other ship, that they should come and help them. And they came, and filled both the ships, so that they began to sink." "When Simon Peter saw [it], he fell down at Jesus' knees, saying, Depart from me; for I am a sinful man, O Lord." "For he was astonished, and all that were with him, at the draught of the fishes which they had taken:" "And so [was] also James, and John, the sons of Zebedee, which were partners with Simon. And Jesus said unto Simon, Fear not; from henceforth thou shalt catch men." "And when they had brought their ships to land, they forsook all, and followed him."

Not that we need any reason for them "forsaking all, and following" Jesus, but they had just seen an overwhelming miracle, plus they had just heard Jesus preach. There would be no way that they would not follow Him.

You see, the very best way to explain a Scripture is to find a more detailed Scripture on the very same incident and let it explain it for you. Notice, that the Sea of Galilee and Lake of Gennesaret are one and the same. Peter was called by Simon also, and in one place called by both names at once, Simon Peter.

There is no further explanation necessary why they left their nets and followed Jesus. It was just because He told them to. They believed nothing was impossible to Him after seeing this miracle.

Mark Chapter 1 Continued Questions

1. Where did Jesus come from before He was baptized?
2. Who baptized Jesus?
3. Where was He baptized?
4. Why was Jesus baptized?
5. What occupation had Joseph practiced?
6. Who did the world believe was Jesus' father?
7. What age did Hebrew men begin to minister?
8. In prophecy, what two things were spoken of Jesus that indicated where He would be from?
9. When Jesus came out of the baptismal water, what descended upon Him?

10. What did it symbolize?
11. What did the voice from heaven say?
12. What does the author think stands out the most in Verses 10 and 11?
13. Tell how we saw Father, Son, and Holy Ghost at the baptism.
14. When did Jesus' ministry officially begin?
15. What one thing at Jesus' baptism should have left no doubt who He is?
16. What drove Jesus into the wilderness?
17. Why was He drawn to the wilderness?
18. How long was Jesus in the wilderness to be tempted?
19. What Scriptures in Matthew and Luke tell of this same incident?
20. What does the Scripture the spirit driveth him into the wilderness mean?
21. Who and what tempts a person to sin?
22. When we sin, what causes it?
23. The devil tried to tempt Jesus in His flesh, what happened?
24. When did the angels minister to Jesus?
25. How long did Jesus fast?
26. What number is symbolic of trials and tribulations?
27. What does James 4:7 teach us about the devil?
28. When did Jesus come into Galilee to preach?
29. What did He preach there?
30. Why had John been put in prison?
31. What is the gospel?
32. Christians should not dread death, but should _____.-
33. Who was Simon's brother?
34. What was Simon's other name?
35. What was Simon's and his brother's occupation?

36. What did Jesus call them to do?
37. In what book do we find a more detailed account of this same thing?
38. What great miracle did Jesus perform for them before He called them to the ministry?
39. Who were Simon's partners, besides his brothers?
40. Why did Simon tell Jesus to depart from him?
41. How did they, Simon and his brother, answer Jesus' call?

Mark Chapter 1 Second Continued

Mark 1:19 "And when he had gone a little farther thence, he saw James the [son] of Zebedee, and John his brother, who also were in the ship mending their nets."

“James ... John”: The second set of fishermen brothers called by Jesus (see note on verse 16). Their mother and Jesus’ mother may have been sisters (15:20; Matt. 27:55-56 with John 19:25).

This is not a discrepancy from the account we studied in the last lesson. This is just the difference in several people telling the same story. We see here, that all the important details are the same as in the other accounts.

Now in addition to Peter and Andrew, the Lord had discovered James and John. These were fishermen whom the Lord would make fishers of men. We see that James and John were the sons of Zebedee, the sons of thunder.

Mark 1:20 "And straightway he called them: and they left their father Zebedee in the ship with the hired servants, and went after him."

“Hired servants”: This indicates that Zebedee’s fishing business was a prosperous one and that he was a man of importance (John 18:15).

Fishing was an honorable way of making a living. These were men who knew how to work hard to get the job done. They, without hesitation answered the call Jesus had placed on their lives. We see here, that James and John had given up family, job, their home, and security to follow Jesus.

In (Mark 10:29-30), we see what happens to those who give up things of this world to follow Jesus.

Mark 10:29-30 "And Jesus answered and said, Verily I say unto you, There is no man that hath left house, or brethren, or sisters, or father, or mother, or wife, or children, or lands, for my sake, and the gospel's," "But he shall receive an hundredfold now in this time, houses, and brethren, and sisters, and mothers, and children, and lands, with persecutions; and in the world to come eternal life."

Verses 1:21 – 3:12: Mark presents a series of incidents showing Jesus’ power and the people’s amazed responses.

Mark 1:21 "And they went into Capernaum; and straightway on the sabbath day he entered into the synagogue, and taught."

“Capernaum”: A prosperous fishing village on the Northwest shore of the Sea of Galilee, Capernaum was a more important city than Nazareth. It contained a Roman garrison and was located on a major road. Jesus made the city His headquarters (2:1), after His rejection at Nazareth (Matt. 4:13; Luke 4:16-31).

“Synagogue”: The place where Jewish people gathered for worship (“synagogue” is a transliteration of a Greek word meaning “to gather together”). Synagogues originated in the Babylonian captivity after the 586 B.C. destruction of the temple by Nebuchadnezzar.

They served as places of worship and instruction. Jesus frequently taught in the synagogues (verse 39; 3:1; 6:2), as did Paul (Acts 13:5; 14:1; 17:1).

“Taught”: Mark frequently mentions Jesus’ teaching ministry (2:13; 4:1-2; 6:2, 6, 34; 10:1; 11:17; 12:35; 14:49).

Capernaum was the home of Peter, Andrew, James and John.

Peter's home was on the outskirts of Capernaum on the banks of the Sea of Galilee. This "they" included Peter, Andrew, James, John, and Jesus. The "He" was Jesus. Jesus taught in the synagogue. Remember that this "Sabbath" is Saturday.

Mark 1:22 "And they were astonished at his doctrine: for he taught them as one that had authority, and not as the scribes."

“Authority”: Jesus’ authoritative teaching, as the spoken Word of God, was in sharp contrast to that of the scribes (experts in the Old Testament Scriptures), who based their authority largely on that of other rabbis. Jesus’ direct, personal, and forceful teaching was so foreign to their experience that those who heard Him were amazed. (Titus 2:15).

Jesus astounds His listeners, for He teaches “as one that had authority.” The surprise is not uniformly pleasant. Some were doubtless offended by His seeming effrontery.

The scribes had limited (head), knowledge of the Scriptures. Jesus is the Word. His message is a message of first hand knowledge. Jesus did not need to bring a faltering message. The scribes were uncertain and their message was a message of interpretation, not of actual fact.

This strong, straightforward, non-wavering message of Jesus astonished them, because Jesus is positive that His message is true. He is the Truth. (John chapter 1:1), tells us that Jesus is, in fact, the Word. His authority is unquestionable for He is God the Word.

John 1:1 "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God."

Verses 23-24: The spirit voices his displeasure at being meddled with by the One he recognizes as God’s “Holy One.”

Mark 1:23 "And there was in their synagogue a man with an unclean spirit; and he cried out,"

“Man ... cried out”: Satan and his demon hosts opposed Jesus’ work throughout His ministry, culminating in the cross. Jesus always triumphed over their futile efforts (Col. 2:15), convincingly demonstrating His ultimate victory by His resurrection.

“Unclean spirit”: I.e., morally impure. The term is used interchangeably in the New Testament with “demon” (see note on 5:2).

Mark 1:24 "Saying, Let [us] alone; what have we to do with thee, thou Jesus of Nazareth? art thou come to destroy us? I know thee who thou art, the Holy One of God."

“What have we to do with thee”: Or, possibly “Why do you interfere with us?” The demon was acutely aware that he and Jesus belonged to two radically different kingdoms, and thus had nothing in common. That the demon used the plural pronoun “we” indicates he spoke for all the demons.

“The Holy One of God” (Psalm 16:10; Dan. 9:24; Luke 4:34; Acts 2:27; 3:14; 4:27; Rev. 3:7). Amazingly, the demon affirmed Jesus’ sinlessness and deity, truths which many in Israel denied, and still deny.

We see that this man was possessed of demons. This is a very good Scripture here to prove just who demons really are. My own personal belief about demons is that they are the third of the angels who followed Lucifer when he was thrown out of heaven.

Angels are ministering spirits. The angels who remained on God's team, minister good. The fallen angels who followed Lucifer are evil, and they minister evil. As Lucifer's name was changed to Satan, these angels became demons.

In the Scripture above, these demons recognized Jesus. If my opinion of who they are is true, they would have known Jesus (the Word), in heaven. It would be natural for them to not only know who He was, but also for them to fear what He might do to them. The fallen angels know that their fate is eternity in hell.

They know that Jesus is the Judge who will determine where they go. So you see this is not ungrounded fear. (In verse 23), when the man cried out, it was actually these evil spirits that cried out. The demons knew Jesus as the Holy One of God.

We have discussed before how Jesus' name that He used at a specific time, was descriptive of the work that He was doing at the time. Such as Jesus, Savior; Christ, Anointed One. This "Holy One of God" is His relationship to the Father in heaven.

Mark 1:25 "And Jesus rebuked him, saying, Hold thy peace, and come out of him."

“Hold thy peace”: Jesus wanted no testimony to the truth from the demonic realm to fuel charges that He was in league with Satan (3:22; Acts 16:16-18).

Jesus commands the spirit to “come out” of the victim. He does not “rebuke” the man, but his oppressor. Jesus issues the same command, “Hold thy peace,” to the storm (in 4:39).

We will see that Jesus was speaking to this evil spirit in the man and not to the man. Jesus is the Lord over all. Jesus is even the Lord over this evil spirit, and this evil spirit had to obey the voice of Jesus. When Jesus told this evil spirit, to hush it hushed. When Jesus told the evil spirit to come out of him, it had to obey Jesus, as we see in the next verse.

Mark 1:26 "And when the unclean spirit had torn him, and cried with a loud voice, he came out of him."

This unclean spirit did not want to give up this body. This unclean spirit tore him and cried with a loud voice, because the spirit was vacating a place he thought he had secured. The devil will not give up without a struggle, but is subject to Jesus. Our Bible says resist the devil, and he will flee from you.

We are no match for the devil ourselves, but the name of Jesus and the blood of Jesus are more powerful than the devil. Just as in the verse above when the unclean spirit obeyed the command of Jesus, we can also, fight unclean spirits with the name of Jesus and the power of His blood.

Mark 1:27 "And they were all amazed, insomuch that they questioned among themselves, saying, What thing is this? what new doctrine [is] this? for with authority commandeth he even the unclean spirits, and they do obey him."

“With authority” (see note on verse 22). Jesus had absolute authority in His actions as well as His words (Matt. 28:18).

You must remember that in the synagogue there was much formality and tradition. Really these scribes had been trained to go through a certain ritual, and they knew technically what was required of them; but they had no power within themselves.

You might say that I am being judgmental, but we have just seen that these evil spirits had no fear of the scribes. They just came right into the synagogue with the man. The amazing thing to them was the power and authority of Jesus' message.

Mark 1:28 "And immediately his fame spread abroad throughout all the region round about Galilee."

“Fame” here is simply “report”; word about Jesus went out quickly in all directions. For some at least it is likely to have seemed “notoriety.”

You can imagine how this would spread. These people coming to the synagogue had never seen anything like this before.

Verses 29-30: “Forthwith” and “anon” are stylistic variations for the same Greek word meaning “immediately.”

Mark 1:29 "And forthwith, when they were come out of the synagogue, they entered into the house of Simon and Andrew, with James and John."

“The house of Simon and Andrew”: Originally from Bethsaida (John 1:44), the two brothers had moved to Capernaum when Jesus established his headquarters there (see note on verse 21).

“James and John”: Only Mark mentions their presence at the healing of Peter’s mother-in-law.

Remember, earlier in this lesson that we mentioned that Peter's home was on the edge of town there at Capernaum by the Sea of Galilee. Perhaps they came back to rest for the night; we are not told in the Scriptures.

Mark 1:30 "But Simon's wife's mother lay sick of a fever, and anon they tell him of her."

“Simon’s wife’s mother”: Paul also affirmed that Peter was married (1 Cor. 9:5). That his mother-in-law was living with Peter and his wife may indicate that her husband was dead.

“A fever”: That she was too ill to get out of bed, coupled with Luke’s description of her fever as “high fever” (Luke 4:38), suggests her illness was serious, even life-threatening.

We see in this Scripture above that Simon, better known as Peter, was married. We also can see from this that his wife's mother was in the house with them. Someone told Jesus of the woman's fever.

Mark 1:31 "And he came and took her by the hand, and lifted her up; and immediately the fever left her, and she ministered unto them."

Peter’s mother-in-law probably fixed a meal. Peter’s family is quickly and dramatically affected by his decision to follow Jesus. This whole incident reflects Peter’s point of view.

Here we see that just one touch from Jesus' hand, and Peter's mother-in-law was made whole. This was not a partial healing, but a total recovery. In fact, she was so much better instantly that she forgot her illness and began to minister to them.

This is very similar to the woman who just touched the hem of Jesus' garment and was healed. Just one touch of His hand can do mighty miracles. This type of healing instantly would be so dramatic that no one could deny it. The word would spread fast.

Verses 32-34: Mark sketches a portrait of a spirited response to Jesus after "the sun did set:" Jews would not have ventured out until evening marked the close of the Sabbath. Jesus' ministry is to both physical and spiritual disorder.

Mark 1:32 "And at even, when the sun did set, they brought unto him all that were diseased, and them that were possessed with devils."

"When the sun did set": Marking the close of the Sabbath and the easing of the restrictions associated with it. Specifically, rabbinic law prohibited carrying any burdens (such as stretchers), on the Sabbath.

"They brought unto him": The report of Jesus' healing of the demon-possessed man in the synagogue and Peter's mother-in-law created a sensation in Capernaum and aroused the hopes of other sufferers.

We see that the fame of Jesus had spread rapidly. By that evening a large group of sick and those possessed with devils had gathered to be healed. These that were brought were almost assuredly the ones whom the physicians had given up on.

When you are sick and there seems no hope, it is time to locate someone with great healing power, and that is just what these people did. Perhaps one reason they came late in the evening was so that they might not be seen by their neighbors.

Mark 1:33-34 "And all the city was gathered together at the door." "And he healed many that were sick of divers diseases, and cast out many devils; and suffered not the devils to speak, because they knew him."

"Suffered not the devils to speak" (see notes on verse 25; 3:11-12).

"Because they knew him": The demon's theology is absolutely orthodox (James 2:19); but because they know the truth, they reject it and God, who is its source.

It seems that these miracles that Jesus had done had spread like wildfire. The whole town knew about it and now gathered at the front door of Peter's house. Jesus came outside and healed all sorts of diseases and cast out many devils.

As we said earlier, these demons were subject to Jesus' commands. We see here again, evidence that these demons were the fallen angels, because they were told by Jesus to keep quiet because they knew Him.

Mark 1:35 "And in the morning, rising up a great while before day, he went out, and departed into a solitary place, and there prayed."

Mark emphasizes that it was a great while before day. Showing that Jesus began each day of His earthly ministry with prayer is only the secondary intention of this verse. The primary aim is to show how Jesus made important decisions: by earnest, persistent prayer.

Here Jesus stands at the crossroads of decision: His first year of public preaching (verses 9-20), has borne little visible fruit. But His miracles of healing are drawing huge crowds (verses 31-32), and bringing Him recognition (verse 28).

So the question is whether He should continue to put the stress of His ministry on the preaching of the gospel for the healing of man's diseased soul, or place the stress of His work on the more popular performing of miracles for the healing of man's body. To make the proper choice, He seeks by prayer the Father's wisdom.

This should be a very good message to us. In the quiet of the very early morning, Jesus went to pray; not with others, but alone. We read, "Be still and know that I am God" (Psalms 46:10).

The most precious times with God is in the privacy of just you and God. Praying is fellowshiping with Him. Even Jesus prayed. We should see even more necessity to pray ourselves.

Mark 1:36 "And Simon and they that were with him followed after him."

"Simon and they that were with him": The first instance in the gospels of Peter's assuming of leadership. Those with Peter are not revealed, though Andrew, James and John were likely among them.

"Followed" is somewhat weak; they were at pains to track Jesus down in His retreat.

Verses 37-38: The disciples bring news of human need. "All men seek for thee," not to hear the gospel, but for viewing His miracles or to be healed physically. Perhaps even at that early hour, people were already gathering to see Jesus.

The decision Jesus has reached by prayer is to "go into the next towns," in order to "preach there also;" He has chosen to pursue the unpopular course and keep the emphasis of His work on preaching the gospel. Why? Because, He says, "therefore came I forth" from heaven: to preach. Jesus' response implicitly involves the disciples in their first mission tour.

Mark 1:37 "And when they had found him, they said unto him, All [men] seek for thee."

Finding Jesus after a diligent search (verse 36), Peter and the others excitedly implored Him to return to Capernaum and capitalize on the excitement generated by the previous night's healings.

We see by this that Jesus already had an overwhelming following. This following was not because of His message however, but so that they might receive something of Him.

Mark 1:38 "And he said unto them, Let us go into the next towns, that I may preach there also: for therefore came I forth."

We know that Jesus did heal and deliver people, but this was not His purpose in coming to the earth. Back in Capernaum there was a group wanting Him to minister to their bodily needs, but Jesus' purpose in coming was to save their souls.

Many times there are physical blessings from Jesus, but His most important role is to renew our spirit in Him. To save our souls from death is Jesus' purpose.

Mark 1:39 "And he preached in their synagogues throughout all Galilee, and cast out devils."

“Throughout all Galilee”: Mark’s terse statement summarizes a preaching tour that must have lasted for weeks, or even months (Matt. 4:23-24).

This summary statement characterizes the scope (“all Galilee”) and activity (preaching, primarily; casting out demons, secondarily), of Jesus’ ministry.

Verses 40-45: Mark relates one of Jesus’ many healings during the Galilean ministry (summarized in verse 39). The leper’s healing emphasizes Jesus’ miraculous power over disease, since leprosy was one of the most dreaded disease of antiquity.

Mark 1:40 "And there came a leper to him, beseeching him, and kneeling down to him, and saying unto him, If thou wilt, thou canst make me clean."

“Leper”: Lepers were considered ceremonially unclean, and were outcasts from society (Lev. 13:11). While the Old Testament term for leprosy included other skin diseases, this man may have actually had true leprosy (Hanson’s Disease), or else his cure would not have created such a sensation (verse 45).

The leper assumes a respectful, if plaintive, posture. His “beseeching” is not based on Jesus’ ability but on His willingness.

"Leprosy" was a dreaded disease. These people were not even allowed to be near the rest of the community. This man was taking his life in his own hands to get to Jesus. The thing that would help him with Jesus was his great faith and humility.

He did not doubt that Jesus could heal him. He said to Jesus, "If you will, you can heal me". Sometimes sin is spoken of as spiritual leprosy. Jesus is the healer of physical or spiritual leprosy.

Mark 1:41 "And Jesus, moved with compassion, put forth [his] hand, and touched him, and saith unto him, I will; be thou clean."

“Compassion”: Only Mark records Jesus’ emotional reaction to the leper’s desperate plight. The Greek word appears only in the synoptic gospels and (apart from parables) is used only in reference to Jesus.

“Touched him”: Unlike rabbis, who avoided lepers lest they become ceremonially defiled, Jesus expressed His compassion with a physical gesture.

Jesus is “moved with compassion” to help. Mark’s picture of Jesus is not of an unmoved problem-solver sweeping serenely and unemotionally from incident to incident (see Hebrews 4:15).

The love that Jesus has for each of us is so far beyond what we can even comprehend that it is easy to understand the love He showed to this man of such great faith. Just one touch of the Master's hand, and he was clean of leprosy, the most dreaded, incurable disease of that day.

Mark 1:42 "And as soon as he had spoken, immediately the leprosy departed from him, and he was cleansed."

This was not a gradual healing, but a sudden complete healing.

Mark 1:43 "And he straitly charged him, and forthwith sent him away;"

“Straitly charged” implies that Jesus was for some reason angry or irritated, as does the vivid “sent him away,” the same verb (as in verse 12). Perhaps Jesus was indignant at the outrage of mankind’s sickness and suffering, affronts to a loving God’s power to redeem His creation from all that is tainted by the imperfect and ultimately evil.

Jesus sent the cleansed man away. Jesus told the man not to tell anyone of his healing, but the gratitude of the man (being brought back as it were from the dead), was too great. He told everyone he saw.

Mark 1:44 "And saith unto him, See thou say nothing to any man: but go thy way, shew thyself to the priest, and offer for thy cleansing those things which Moses commanded, for a testimony unto them."

“Say nothing to any man”: The ensuing publicity would hinder Jesus’ ability to minister (as in fact happened, verse 45), and divert attention away from His message (3:12; 5:43; 7:36; see note on Matt. 8:4).

“Shew thyself to the priest”: The “priest” was the one on duty at the temple. Jesus commanded the healed leper to observe the Old Testament regulations concerning cleansed lepers (Lev. 14-32). Until the required offerings had been made, the man remained ceremonially unclean.

“A testimony unto them”: The priest’s acceptance of the man’s offering would be public affirmation of his cure and cleansing.

Jesus had told him to show himself to the priest. The priest had to examine him and declare him clean before he could move freely among his people. The man was to give an offering suitable in the temple as the Law of Moses had specified.

This ceremony took place without the camp, and the offering was two living birds (clean), cedar wood, scarlet wool, hyssop, two he lambs, one ewe lamb, three tenth deals of flour mingled with oil, and one log of oil. To read more about this, look in the book of Leviticus.

Mark 1:45 "But he went out, and began to publish [it] much, and to blaze abroad the matter, insomuch that Jesus could no more openly enter into the city, but was without in desert places: and they came to him from every quarter."

“Publish it much”: Only Mark records the cleansed leper’s disobedience, although Luke hints at it (Luke 5:15).

“No more openly enter into the city”: The result of the leper’s disobedience was that Jesus could no longer enter a city without being mobbed by those seeking to be cured of diseases. Jesus’ ministry of teaching in that area thus came to a halt.

“Desert places”: Jesus kept to the relatively uninhabited regions to allow the excitement over His cure of the leper to die down. Luke also notes that He used His time in the wilderness for prayer (Luke 5:16).

This incident of the cleansed leper justifies Jesus' decision to emphasize preaching instead of healing. The leper's disobeying Jesus' command to inform no one but the priest of his healing indicates that although he was cleansed physically, he remained un-cleansed inwardly (spiritually).

The healing of man's sin-infected soul is therefore far more important than the healing of his body. The people's enthusiasm over miracles hinders Jesus' freedom to preach, causing Him to remain in the "desert places".

We can easily see why Jesus did not want the man to spread the news of his cleansing of leprosy. Jesus, now, could have no privacy at all and especially in the city. Anyone who had an illness of any kind came to Him. He was overwhelmed by the masses of people surrounding Him, and He fled into the desert. Even in the desert they came to Him from every direction.

We know that Jesus healed so many, that if all the healings were written down there would not have been enough books in all the world to contain them.

Mark Chapter 1 Second Continued Questions

1. Who was the father of James?
2. Who was the brother of James?
3. What occupation did James have?
4. When the brothers left the ship and followed Jesus, who did they leave to help their father Zebedee?
5. What had Peter, Andrew, James, and John given up to follow Jesus?
6. What is promised to those who give up homes and families to follow Jesus?
7. What town did they go to, when they left the sea of Galilee?
8. What did Jesus do there?
9. What day of the week is Sabbath?
10. What type of knowledge did the scribes have?
11. How did they feel about Jesus' doctrine?
12. What type of message did Jesus bring?
13. In John chapter 1 verse 1, we see Jesus is in fact the _____.
14. Why did the man in the synagogue cry out?
15. Who was actually crying out?
16. What did they say?
17. Who did the demons call Jesus?

18. How did they know Him?
19. What does the author think demons are?
20. What was Lucifer's name changed to?
21. What does Jesus mean?
22. What does Christ mean?
23. What did Jesus say to the demon in the man?
24. What did the unclean spirit do to the man?
25. How can Christians successfully fight unclean spirits?
26. What effect did Jesus delivering the man have on the people?
27. What had the scribes been trained to do?
28. What amazed them about Jesus' message?
29. Where did Jesus go when He left the synagogue?
30. Who was sick with a fever?
31. How did Jesus handle the fever?
32. What effect did Jesus' touch have on the woman?
33. Why did Jesus tell the devils not to speak?
34. Where did Jesus pray?
35. When Simon found Jesus, what did he tell Him?
36. Jesus told Peter He came for what?
37. What did the leper say to Jesus?
38. How did Jesus answer him?
39. What did Jesus tell the leper to do after He cleansed him?
40. What book of the Bible tells a great deal about the various sacrifices?
41. Where did Jesus go to try to get away from the masses of people?