

# A Study of Mark - Lesson 01

## Mark 1:1-13 John the Baptist and Jesus

### John the Baptist Prepares the Way

1 <sup>1</sup> The beginning of the good news / about Jesus the Messiah, / the Son of God, / <sup>2</sup> as it is written in Isaiah the prophet: /

“I will send my messenger ahead of you, / who will prepare your way” /— <sup>3</sup> “a voice of one calling in the wilderness, / ‘Prepare the way for the Lord, / make straight paths for him.’”

<sup>4</sup> And so John the Baptist / appeared in the wilderness, / preaching a baptism of repentance / for the forgiveness of sins. /

<sup>5</sup> The whole Judean countryside / and all the people of Jerusalem / went out to him. / Confessing



their sins, / they were baptized by him / in the Jordan River. / <sup>6</sup> John wore clothing made of camel’s hair, / with a leather belt around his waist, / and he ate locusts / and wild honey. / <sup>7</sup> And this was his message: / “After me / comes the one more powerful than I, / the

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straps of whose sandals / I am not worthy to stoop down and untie. / <sup>8</sup> I baptize you with water, / but he will baptize you / with the Holy Spirit.”

## **The Baptism and Testing of Jesus**

<sup>9</sup> At that time / Jesus came from Nazareth / in Galilee / and was baptized by John / in the Jordan. / <sup>10</sup> Just as Jesus was coming up / out of the water, / he saw heaven being torn open / and the Spirit descending on him / like a dove. /



<sup>11</sup> And a voice came from heaven: / “You are my Son, / whom I love; / with you I am well pleased.”

<sup>12</sup> At once the Spirit sent him out / into the wilderness, / <sup>13</sup> and he was in the wilderness forty days, / being tempted by Satan. / He was with the wild animals, / and angels attended him.

## **Vocabulary**

1. **Messenger:** A person who takes a message or information to another.
2. **Wilderness, wild:** [The y glide is used to help pronunciation. Words like *wild*, sound like wi(y)ld. Wilderness and wild do not sound the same. ] A wilderness is natural unfarmed land. Backwoods.  
To be a *voice crying in the wilderness* means to be giving advice or help that is not likely to be followed.
3. **A baptism of repentance:** A rite or ritual of purification. Here it symbolizes a *getting right with God*.
4. **Camel’s hair clothing:** Here it symbolizes rough clothing, but in modern times it is an expensive, finely made luxury.

5. **Locusts:** Swarming grasshoppers.



6. **Sandals:** Open shoes with flat soles.



7. **To stoop down:** Walk or stand bent over. To condescend.

## **Questions**

1. What is a prophet?
2. What kind of opening does Mark use? Where else is this opening used?
3. Who is Isaiah the prophet? Where can you find out more about him?
4. What does water symbolize?
5. Why would Jesus seek out this new prophet and want to be baptized?
6. For Christians, what does the baptism represent?

## **Pronunciation**

Speak with authority. We call this power English. Both Jesus and John the Baptist spoke with authority and people listened.

## **Notes**

1. When a king would make a trip throughout his land, he would send a servant ahead to announce his coming. This *forerunner* would let the people know in time to repair the roads and make a proper greeting for the king. John is doing this for Jesus.
2. John is the son of Zechariah and Elizabeth. His birth story is told in Luke 1. (Perhaps he is a cousin to Jesus; no one knows for sure.)

3. John was a prophet who preached to the people at a spot near the Jordan River where travellers often crossed. Many came out to hear him. Many believed in God and wanted forgiveness. John baptized them in the Jordan River.
4. The Jordan River may be the most famous river in the world. It provides the fresh water for Israel and the region. It is the largest river in Israel and is formed from three streams in the foothills of Mount Herman.

