

# MARK 1:9-13

## PROLOGUE (PART II)

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# MARK 1:9-11

## JESUS' (POST-)BAPTISM

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- Mark doesn't include anything about Jesus' background, birth, baby shower, etc. (Garland, 47 cf. Mk 3:31-35, 6:3; Brooks, 41; Guelich, 31; Stein, 54; Strauss, 71).
- Baptism account is only 53 words in Greek (Edwards, 34).
- The baptism is only mentioned in one verse (Mk 1:9); it's more about what happened **after** the Baptism
- Mark focuses on Jesus' connection with John the Baptist (Stein, 54) who was in the **wilderness** and on Jesus' ministry as the fulfillment of prophecies (Guelich, 31)
- Three important experiences that signified the inauguration of the kingdom of God (Edwards, 34 cf. France, 74)
  - (1) heavens are torn open (2) the Holy Spirit descends into Jesus, (3) God's heavenly voice speaks (cf. T. Levi 18:6-8; Edwards, 34; cf. France, 74)
- These provide heavenly affirmation that Jesus is, in fact, the Messiah and the Son of God (Stein, 60; Strauss, 69) – and the prophesied Suffering Servant (Strauss, 69)

# MARK 1:9

## JESUS FROM WHERE?

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- And it came to pass, in those days, that **Jesus** came from **Nazareth of Galilee** and was baptized in the Jordan by John (Mark 1:9, AT)
- (And) the **whole land of Judah** and **all the people of Jerusalem** were going out to him, and were being baptized by him in the Jordan River, confessing their sin. (Mk 1:5, AT)
- Contrast: **one** person (Jesus) vs. **all** the people; from **Nazareth** vs. from **Judea** (Witherington, 73; Lane, 54; cf. France, 76)
- Nazareth was an insignificant village (Witherington, 73); Jerusalem was religious center of Judaism (cf. Garland, 47; Lane, 54)
- Nazareth is not even mentioned in the OT (Garland, 47; Lane, 54) or by Josephus or the Talmud (Schnabel, 44; Brooks, 42; France, 75; Stein, 55).
- Town of about 400 people (Schnabel, 44). Likely where Jesus grew up (Mt 2:23; Lk 2:39-40, 4:17; Brooks, 42; cf. Edwards, 34)
- Apparently, there was a mutual distrust/hostility between the people of Judea in the south and the people of Galilee in the north (cf. Mk 14:67, 70; Jn 7:40-52; France, 75)
- 46 “**Nazareth!** Can anything good come from there?” Nathanael asked. (Jn 1:46, NIV; English, 38; Schnabel, 44; France, 75; Strauss, 71)
- The Stronger One who was to **come** after John has **come** (cf. Mk 1:7; Stein, 55)

# MARK 1:9

## JESUS BAPTIZED BY WHO?

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- Juxtaposition: John said he baptized by water but the One who would come after Him by the Holy Spirit (Mk 1:8); now Jesus is baptized by John? (cf. Lane, 54; France, 75; cf. Stein, 55)
- The NT tells us that Jesus was sinless (cf. 2 Cor 5:21; Heb 4:15; 1 Pet 2:22, etc.). That Jesus received John's repentance-baptism for the forgiveness of sins can be puzzling since Mark doesn't tell us the reason (Garland, 47; Cole, 107; Brooks, 42)
- 14 But John tried to deter him, saying, "I need to be baptized by you, and do you come to me?" 15 Jesus replied, "Let it be so now; it is proper for us to do this to fulfill all righteousness." Then John consented. (Mt 3:14-15, NIV; English, 39; Garland, 47; Cole, 107; Schnabel, 45; Brooks, 42; Guelich, 31; France, 75; Stein, 55; Strauss, 75)
- Because this is potentially embarrassing, it speaks to the event's authenticity (English, 39; Brooks, 42; Stein, 55)
- By being baptized, Jesus identifies with the people He has come to save (English, 39; Bock, 409; Schnabel, 45). Like Moses, he **gives up His regal status** to enter the ranks of His people (Garland, 53; Lane, 55).
- Jesus did not need to repent from sin at His first baptism in the water; He did not deserve to die because of sin at His second baptism (i.e., death cf. Rom 6:3-4) on the cross (cf. Mk 10:38; Lk 12:50; Keener, 155).



# MARK 1:10

## HE SAW STRAIGHT AWAY!

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- *And straight away, after ascending up out of the water, He saw the heavens being torn open and the Spirit descending like a dove into Him (Mk 1:10, AT)*
- **Straight away** (εὐθύς| euthys) is adverb-form of the adjective translated “straight” in Mk 1:3 (make His paths **straight**).
- The adverb, often translated **immediately**, occurs over 40 times in Mark (UBS, 27; Witherington, 74; Bock, 407; Brooks, 42; Edwards, 39; Stein, 56; Strauss, 71)
- Often used as a connecting particle between accounts (e.g, “so then”) (UBS, 27; Strauss, 71). Not always meant literally (Witherington, 74; Stein, 56)
- Its repetition gives readers the impression that the narrative is progressing “at a breakneck or breathless pace” (Witherington, 74 cf. Edwards, 39; Strauss, 71), “heighten[ing] dramatic tension” (Brooks, 42)
- After ascending or **coming up** implies immersion (Brooks, 42; Strauss, 72). Paralleled with **coming down** of the Spirit (Lane, 55; Guelich, 31)

# MARK 1:10

## HEAVENS TORN OPEN

- Text says that *Jesus* saw (Witherington, 74; Kernaghan, 35; Bock, 407; Garland, 49) this does not mean that *only* Jesus saw (cf. France, 74; cf. Mt 3:16-17). John the Baptist saw as well (Jn 1:32-34; English, 39; France, 74; Strauss, 73)
- *Torn* (σχίζω | *schizō*): “tear, divide, separate” (NIDNTTE, 418 cf. EDNT, 318). Matthew (Mt 3:16) and Luke (Lk 3:21) use a different word that simply means “to open” (ἀνοίγω; NIDNTTE, 419; Garland, 48; Edwards, 35)
- The heavens being torn open can imply “outpouring of divine blessing” (Deut 28:12; Ps 78:23 [LXX 77:23]; Mal 3:10; but note Gen 7:11; Isa 24:18; NIDNTTE, 419)
- 12 The LORD will **open the heavens**, the storehouse of his bounty, to send rain on your land in season and to bless all the work of your hands. You will lend to many nations but will borrow from none (Dt 28:12, NIV; NIDNTTE, 419)
- Can also imply “divine disclosure” (cf. Ezek 1:1; John 1:51; Acts 7:56; 10:11; NIDNTTE, 419; cf. Keener, 130; cf. Rev 4:1, 11:19; Guelich, 32; France, 77)
- In my **thirtieth** year, in the fourth month on the fifth day, while I was among the exiles by the Kebar River, the **heavens were opened** and I saw visions of God. (Eze 1:1, NIV; Keener, 130; English, 39; Garland, 48; France, 77)



# MARK 1:10

## HEAVENS TORN OPEN

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- Likely, it alludes to Isaiah 64:1 (NIDNTTE, 419; Witherington, 74; Kernaghan, 35; Garland, 48; Brooks, 42; Lane, 55; Guelich, 32; Edwards, 34; cf. Keener, 150; France, 77; Strauss, 72; contra Stein, 57) where Isaiah asks the LORD to come down and deliver His people (Bock, 407)
- Oh, that you would **rend the heavens** and **come down**, that the mountains would tremble before you! (Is 64:1, NIV)
- In the first exodus, God did not come down until the people were consecrated (Ex 19:10f.; Lane, 55)
- “When Jesus comes out of the water, Mark tells us, **all heaven breaks loose.**” (Garland, 48)
- The curtain of the temple was **torn [schizō]** in two from top to bottom. And when the centurion, who stood there in front of Jesus, saw how he died, he said, “Surely this man was the Son of God!” (Mk 15:38-39, NIV; Bock, 407; Brooks, 42; Edwards, 35-36; France, 74; Stein, 56; Strauss, 72)
- Both rendings are “supernatural occurrences revealing Jesus as the Son of God” (Edwards, 35-36) – “bookends” (inclusio, Strauss, 72)





# MARK 1:10

## DESCEND LIKE A DOVE

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- Mark may not be saying that Spirit looks like a dove (Witherington, 74; Bock, 407; Garland, 48). The Spirit has a “dove-like descent” (BDAG, 806), “like a dove coming gently down for a landing” (Witherington, 74 cf. Bock, 407; Garland, 48)
- But it could mean that the Spirit looked like a dove (Schnabel, 45; Edwards, 36). Luke is more explicit: “and the Holy Spirit descended on him in **bodily form like a dove**” (Lk 3:22a, NIV; cf. Mt 3:16; Jn 1:32-34; Guelich, 32; France, 78)
- Writers used doves symbolically in various ways but most often to refer to the people of Israel (Keener, 130; Lane, 56; cf. Hos 7:11; France, 78). Rarely was the Spirit likened to a dove (Keener, 130)
- Could allude to God’s promise of a new world after the Flood (Gen 8:10-12; Keener, 130; Cole, 109; cf. 1 Pet 3:20-21; France, 79; Strauss, 72; contra Schnabel, 45)
- Could allude to Genesis 1:2 Now the earth was formless and empty, darkness was over the surface of the deep, and the **Spirit of God was hovering** over the waters. (Gen 1:2, NIV; English, 40; Garland, 48; Cole, 108 cf. 2 Cor 5:17; Brooks, 43; Lane, 56; Edwards, 36; France, 79; Strauss, 72; contra Schnabel, 45; contra Stein, 57)
- Could just be because doves were a common bird (France, 79). Spirit descends **after** baptism, not during (Witherington, 74); Baptism is the **occasion** not the **means** or **cause** of the Spirit’s descent (Guelich, 31; Stein, 56)



# MARK 1:10

## DESCENT INTO JESUS

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- In Scripture, typically it is said that the Spirit comes *upon* someone (cf. Num 24:2, Judg 3:10, 11:29; 1 Sam 19:20, 23; 2 Ch 15:1.; cf. Mt 3:16; Lk 3:22; UBS, 28; cf. France, 77)
- As he approached Lehi, the Philistines came toward him shouting. **The Spirit of the Lord came powerfully upon him.** The ropes on his arms became like charred flax, and the bindings dropped from his hands. Finding a fresh jawbone of a donkey, he grabbed it and struck down a thousand men. (Judg 15:14-15, NIV)
- 13 So Samuel took the horn of oil and anointed him in the presence of his brothers, and from that day on the **Spirit of the LORD came powerfully upon David.** Samuel then went to Ramah. (1 Sam 16:13, NIV; Schnabel, 45; France, 77)
- A shoot will come up from the stump of **Jesse**; from his roots a Branch will bear fruit. **The Spirit of the Lord will rest on him**— the Spirit of wisdom and of understanding, the Spirit of counsel and of might, the Spirit of the knowledge and fear of the Lord (Is 11:1-2, NIV; cf. Is 61:1; Schnabel, 45; Guelich, 32; France, 77; Stein, 57; Strauss, 72)

# MARK 1:10

## DESCENT INTO JESUS

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- Here Mark says the Spirit descended **into** Jesus; He is “Spirit-filled and Spirit-led” (UBS, 29 cf. Edwards, 36; France, 78)
- The indwelling of the Holy Spirit is not **temporary** but **permanent** (France, 78)
- Jesus is “anointed by the very presence and power of God” (Witherington, 75 cf. France, 74). This confirms that Jesus is the Messiah (Mk 1:1; cf. Is 61:1; Schnabel, 45); Messiah = **Anointed One** (Stein, 54; Strauss, 72)
- The Spirit empowers Jesus’ words and deeds (Witherington, 75; Strauss, 72)
- Jesus, **full of the Holy Spirit**, left the Jordan and was led by the Spirit into the wilderness, (Lk 4:1, NIV; Guelich, 37)



# MARK 1:11

## HEAVENLY, PROPHETIC VOICE

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- *And a voice came from the heavens: "You are my Son, the Beloved. In you I am well pleased."* (Mk 1:11, AT)
- Jewish teachers believed that prophecy had ceased (with Malachi) but that God spoke from heaven (*bath qol*). This voice was not considered as important as prophecy (Keener, 130 cf. Edwards, 35; Guelich, 33)
- Nevertheless this is not the “daughter of a voice” (*bath qol*) but the very voice of God (Witherington, 75 cf. Bock, 408; Brooks, 43; Guelich, 33; cf. France, 79)
- God speaks directly to Jesus (2<sup>nd</sup> person) (as in Lk 3:22 cf. 3<sup>rd</sup> person Mt 3:17; English, 39)
- “Compound of familiar O.T. phrases Ps 2:7, Isa 42:1; cf. also Gen 22:2... full of meaning” (UBS, 31; Keener, 130; Witherington, 75; Kernaghan, 35; Bock, 408; Garland, 49; Schnabel, 46; Brooks, 43; Edwards, 37; Strauss, 73; cf. Guelich, 34; France, 79)
- These three Scriptures imply that Jesus is “the royal Messiah, the Son of God” (Ps 2:7), God’s beloved (unique) Son paralleling Abraham and Isaac (Gen 22:2), and the Suffering Servant of Isaiah (Is 42:1) (Keener, 130 cf. Guelich, 34)

# MARK 1:11

## SON OF GOD (PS 2:7)

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- 1 Why do the nations conspire and the peoples plot in vain? 2 The kings of the earth rise up and the rulers band together against the Lord and against his anointed, saying, 3 “Let us break their chains and throw off their shackles.” 4 The One enthroned in heaven laughs; the Lord scoffs at them. 5 He rebukes them in his anger and terrifies them in his wrath, saying, 6 “I have installed **my king** on Zion, my holy mountain.” (Ps 2:1-6, NIV)
- I will proclaim the Lord’s decree: He said to me, “**You are my son**; today I have become your father. (Ps 2:7, NIV; UBS, 31; English, 40; Cole, 108; Lane, 57; Edwards, 37) — second line is not included in Mark (cf. Ac 13:33; France, 82)
- This psalm was often sung when a Jewish king was **enthroned** (Witherington, 75; Kernaghan, 35; Garland, 49; Edwards, 37; France, 80). “My son” is a title for Davidic kings (2 Sam 7:12-16) (Garland, 49; Schnabel, 26; France, 80)
- God did not adopt Jesus at His baptism (English, 40; Edwards, 38; France, 82; Stein, 58). He does not **become** the Son of God; He already was (Mk 1:1; Cole, 108 cf. Lane, 58; Edwards, 38; France, 82; Stein, 58). His Sonship was not **established** here, but **confirmed** (Edwards, 38-39)
- Implies that Jesus is “the one through whom God’s reign would be established” (Kernaghan, 35). Jesus is King (cf. Mk 15:2, 9, 18, 32; Garland, 49; cf. Mk 15:12, 26; Stein, 74) — the royal Messiah (France, 81)



# MARK 1:11

## THE BELOVED OF GOD (GEN 22:2)

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- David was the king God loved (Ps 89:28, 33) and Israel as a whole was called God's beloved (Jer 12:7; Hos 11:1; Kernaghan, 36)
- “When Israel was a child, **I loved him**, and out of Egypt I called **my son**. (Hos 11:1, NIV; Kernaghan, 36; Lane, 56)
- 22 Then say to Pharaoh, ‘This is what the LORD says: Israel is **my firstborn son**, (Ex 4:22, NIV; Lane, 56; Edwards, 37; Stein, 58)
- Greek lit. “The Son of Mine, the beloved”. In the LXX, beloved (ἀγαπητός | *agapētos*) is used to mean “favorite” or “only” (UBS, 31 cf. Cole, 108; Guelich, 34; cf. Jn 1:14, 18, 3:16, 18, Stein, 59) or “unique” (Bock, 408 cf. Heb 11:17)
- Then God said, “**Take your son, your only son, whom you love [agapētos, LXX]** —Isaac—and go to the region of Moriah. **Sacrifice** him there as a burnt offering on a mountain I will show you.” (Gen 22:2, NIV; UBS, 31; Stein, 58)
- 12 “Do not lay a hand on the boy,” he said. “Do not do anything to him. Now I know that you fear God, because you have not withheld from me your son, your **only [agapētos, LXX]** son (Gen 22:12, NIV; cf. Gen 22:16; Bock, 408)

# MARK 1:11

## THE BELOVED OF GOD (GEN 22:2)

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- 7 Then a cloud appeared and covered them, and a voice came from the cloud: “**This is my Son, whom I love [agapētos]**. Listen to him!” (Mk 9:7, NIV; UBS, 31; Garland, 49; Schnabel, 46; Stein, 58; Strauss, 73; France, 82)
- Parable of the Tenants: “He had one left to send, **a son, whom he loved**. He sent him last of all, saying, ‘They will respect my son.’ (Mk 12:6, NIV; UBS, 31; Garland, 49; Schnabel, 46; Stein, 58; France, 82)
- Jesus, as God’s unique Son, receives “full endowment of God’s Spirit, equipping him for ministry.” (Witherington, 75 cf. Lane, 57; Guelich, 34)
- Abraham’s willingness to sacrifice His **beloved** son is maybe paralleled with God’s willingness to sacrifice His **beloved** son (Schnabel, 46; Edwards, 38; Strauss, 73; France, 81; cf. Jn 3:16)
- This account provides heavenly confirmation that Jesus is the Messiah, the Son of God (cf. Mk 1:1; Brooks, 43 cf. Lane, 58; Guelich, 35; France, 74)

# MARK 1:11

## THE SERVANT OF GOD (IS 42:1)

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- I “Here is **my servant**, whom I uphold, my chosen one in **whom I delight**; **I will put my Spirit on him**, and he will bring justice to the nations. 2 He will not shout or cry out, or raise his voice in the streets. 3 A bruised reed he will not break, and a smoldering wick he will not snuff out. In faithfulness he will bring forth justice; 4 he will not falter or be discouraged till he establishes justice on earth. In his teaching the islands will put their hope.” (Is 42:1-4, NIV; UBS, 28; English, 40; Cole, 109; Lane, 57; cf. Is 49:3; Edwards, 37; Guelich, 32; cf. Mt 12:17-21; France, 77) The Servant has “**patient faithfulness**” (Schnabel, 47) and is **nonviolent** (France, 81)
- In the OT, David (Is 37:25), Daniel (Dn 6:20), Moses (2 Ch 1:3), Israel as a whole (Is 43:10) and others are called servants of the LORD (cf. Nebuchadnezzar Jer 27:6, 43:10; Kergnahan, 36)
- However this servant is the prophesied Suffering Servant (Kernaghan, 36; cf. Isaiah 53) who will bring justify many by His sacrifice (Strauss, 73; contra Stein, 59). (cf. Is 53:11)
- Jesus fulfills the prophecy of the Suffering Servant who would bring redemption for God’s people through His suffering (cf. Is 52:13-53:12; Brooks, 43; Kernaghan, 36) and bring the LORD’s salvation to the ends of the earth (Is 49:6; Edwards, 37)



# MARK 1:12

## DRIVEN OUT INTO THE WILDERNESS

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- *And, straight away, the Spirit drives Him out into the wilderness. (Mk 1:12, AT)*
- Compared to Matthew (Mt 4:1-11) and Luke (Lk 4:1-13) Mark's account of Jesus' temptation is very brief (Kernaghan, 39; English, 43; Schnabel, 47; Lane, 59; Edwards, 39; Stein, 62).
- The Spirit does not send Jesus into the wilderness, He “expel[s]” / “drive[s] out” (ἐκβάλλω | *ekballō*) Jesus into the wilderness (BDAG, 299; cf. Kernaghan, 39; cf. Mt 4:1; Lk 4:1; English, 43; Brooks, 43; Edwards, 39; France, 84; Stein, 62; Strauss, 73 cf. Bock, 408)
- This is the same word used when Jesus **drives out** demons (Mk 1:34, 39, 3:15, 22, 23, 6:13, 7:26, 9:18, 28, 38; UBS, 32) or when people are sent away (Mk 1:43, 5:40, 11:15, 12:8; UBS, 32)
- So he traveled throughout Galilee, preaching in their synagogues and **driving out [ekballō]** demons. (Mk 1:39, NIV; UBS, 32)
- Or people: On reaching Jerusalem, Jesus entered the temple courts and began **driving out [ekballō]** those who were buying and selling there. He overturned the tables of the money changers and the benches of those selling doves, (Mk 11:15, NIV; UBS, 32)
- Does not mean that Jesus resisted the Spirit or was unwilling, however (UBS, 32; English, 43), but there is a sense of urgency (English, 43) and “divine necessity” (Brooks, 43)



# MARK 1:12

## INTO THE WILDERNESS (TEST)

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- Many believed that demons were “attracted to pagan temples, bathhouses, graveyards, and **deserts**” (Keener, 130 cf. Is 34:14; Dt 32:17; Witherington, 76)
- The wilderness was thought to be the home of (often evil) supernatural forces (UBS, 33-34; Cole, 109). Jesus is battling Satan “on Satan’s own turf” (Keener, 130 cf. Garland, 50).
- Israel was tested in the wilderness (cf. Ps 95:7-11; Witherington, 76; Cole, 109; cf. Dt 8:2; Brooks, 44; Edwards, 40; Strauss, 74). For Israel, the wilderness was a “place of disobedience, judgment, and grace” (Garland, 53 cf. Edwards, 40)
- Unlike Israel who failed the wilderness test (Cole, 110; cf. Nebuchadnezzar? Dn 4:28-37; Witherington, 76) or Adam who was tempted by Satan and failed (Bock, 409; Guelich, 39; contra Stein, 64), Jesus passes the test (some scholars are unsure of this; Brooks, 43)
- Although Satan does not reappear in the narrative, Mark does not mention a decisive victory over him (Garland, 54; cf. Schnabel, 47; Brooks, 44; Lane, 60; Guelich, 38; cf. France, 84).
- Like Job: God confirms that Job is blameless (Job 1:8) and then allows Satan to test him (France, 84). God is sovereign (France, 86)
- Sets the stage for a major theme of Mark – Jesus’ battle with demonic forces (Witherington, 76; Garland, 54 cf. Brooks, 44; cf. Lane, 60, 62)

# MARK 1:13

## FORTY DAYS

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- *And He was in the wilderness forty days, being tempted by Satan, and He was with the wild animals and the angels were serving Him. (Mk 1:13, AT)*
- **Forty** days could just be an expression for a “long but limited period” (cf. 1 Sam 17:16; Ac 1:3; Schnabel, 47; cf. Num 13:25; Jon 3:4; France, 85; cf. Judg 13:1; Ac 7:23,30).
- It rained for forty days during the Flood (Gen 7:4; Schnabel, 47; Guelich, 38; France, 85; cf. Gen 7:12; Stein, 63). Jesus appeared to His disciples for forty days after the Resurrection (Ac 1:3; Schnabel, 47; Brooks, 44; France, 85)
- 28 Moses was there with the LORD **forty days and forty nights** without eating bread or drinking water. And he wrote on the tablets the words of the covenant—the Ten Commandments. (Ex 34:28, NIV; English, 44; Bock, 408; Edwards, 40; Guelich, 38; cf. Ex 24:28; Brooks, 44; cf. Lane, 60; cf. Dt 9:9; France, 85; Stein, 63)
- 8 So he got up and ate and drank. Strengthened by that food, he [Elijah] traveled **forty days and forty nights** until he reached Horeb, the mountain of God (1 Ki 19:8, NIV; English, 44; Bock, 408; Brooks, 44; Edwards, 40; Guelich, 38; Lane, 60; France, 85; Stein, 63)
- Israel wandered in the wilderness for **forty years** (English, 44 cf. Dt 8:2; Edwards, 40; cf. Dt 2:7; Ps 95:10; Stein, 63): 34 For **forty years**—one year for each of the forty days you explored the land—you will suffer for your sins and know what it is like to have me against you (Num 14:34, NIV; Bock, 409; Straus, 74)

# MARK 1:13

## THE TEMPTATIONS

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- Tempt (πειράζω | *peirazō*) can mean to “entice to improper behavior” (BDAG, 793) or to “try” (EDNT, 64), “test, put on trial” (NIDNTTE, 694 cf. Witherington, 80; Brooks, 44; France, 85; Strauss, 73)
- The Pharisees came and began to question Jesus. To **test** [*peirazō*] him, they asked him for a sign from heaven (Mk 8:11, NIV; cf. Mk 10:2, 12:15; UBS, 33)
- **Satan** (Σατανᾶς | *Satanas*) is the Greek equivalent of the Aramaic *satana*’ (UBS, 33). In the OT, *satan* literally means “adversary” (UBS, 33 cf. BDAG, 916; Bock, 408; Brooks, 44; Edwards, 40; Stein, 64; Strauss, 74) or “accuser” (UBS, 33) or “opponent” (cf. 1 Ch 21:1; Job 1:6-12, 2:1-7; Zec 3:1-2; Strauss, 74). Eventually became a proper name (Schnabel, 47; Stein, 64)
- In the NT, Satan = the devil (*diabolos*) (UBS, 33 cf. Mt 4:1; Lk 4:2); Mark only uses the term Satan (cf. Mk 4:15; NIDNTTE, 266; Edwards, 40; Stein, 64; Strauss, 74) and assigns the name to Peter (Mk 8:33; France, 84)
- Jesus faced physical and spiritual adversity (Witherington, 75) right after His baptism. This may have been encouraging for Mark’s readers who may have been facing persecution (Cole, 109; more than the Resurrection, though?, Stein, 65)
- Remember how the Lord your God led you all the way in **the wilderness these forty years**, to humble and **test** you in order to know what was in your heart, whether or not you would keep his commands. (Dt 8:2, NIV; Edwards, 40; Guelich, 38; France, 85)
- Satan tempts us, God tests us. Intent differs. (Witherington, 80 cf. Gen 3:1-7 vs. Dt 8:2; Guelich, 38)



# MARK 1:13

## GOOD, BEASTLY COMPANY?

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- Mark is the only gospel writer to mention the wild animals (English, 44; Brooks, 44; Lane, 60; Guelich, 38). Safety among wild beasts often demonstrated the protection of God (Keener, 130)
- 22 My God sent his angel, and he **shut the mouths of the lions**. They have not hurt me, because I was found innocent in his sight. Nor have I ever done any wrong before you, Your Majesty.” (Dn 6:22, NIV; cf. Eze 34:25; Keener, 130; Cole, 109)
- Some say this is an allusion to Adam in the Garden of Eden (Kernaghan, 40; Garland, 50; Lane, 61; cf. Rom 5:12-21; Lk 3:38; 1 Cor 15:22, 45-49; Guelich, 39; Strauss, 74; contra Stein, 64) or to the fulfillment of prophecy
- Now the Lord God had formed out of the ground all the **wild animals** and all the birds in the sky. He brought them to the man to see what he would name them; and whatever the man called each living creature, that was its name. (Gen 2:19, NIV; Garland, 50; Edwards, 40; cf. Gen 1:28; Schnabel, 47; cf. Is 65:17-25; Guelich, 39; France, 86)
- The wolf will live with the lamb, the leopard will lie down with the goat, the calf and the lion and the yearling together; and a little child will lead them. The cow will feed with the bear, their young will lie down together, and the lion will eat straw like the ox. The infant will play near the cobra’s den, the young child will put its hand into the viper’s nest. (Is 11:6-8, NIV; English, 44; Kernaghan, 41; Bock, 408; Garland, 50; cf. Job 5:22-23; Edwards, 40; cf. Is 65:25; Hos 2:18; Schnabel, 47; Guelich, 37; France, 86; Stein, 63)





# MARK 1:13

## BAD, BEASTLY COMPANY?

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- Likely does not mean that this was a paradise-like experience (EDNT, 148-149; Witherington, 75; Garland, 50; Brooks, 44; Lane, 61; Edwards, 41; Stein, 63; contra Guelich 38, 39)
- Wild animals were often bad news (cf. Is 13:21, Ps 91:11-13; Job 5:22f.; UBS, 33-34 cf. Bock, 408; cf. Lev 26:21-23; Ps 22:12-21; Eze 34:8; Dan 7:1-8; Garland, 50; Brooks, 44; Guelich, 38; cf. Num 21:6; Dt 8:15; France, 86; Stein, 63) — they are probably hostile (Edwards, 41; France, 86)
- Some say wild animals are mentioned because, at the time of Mark's writing, Christians were being persecuted in Rome and torn apart by wild animals under the Emperor Nero in the 60's AD (Kernaghan, 40; Edwards, 41)
- 9 If you say, "The Lord is my refuge," and you make the Most High your dwelling, 10 no harm will overtake you, no disaster will come near your tent. 11 For he will **command his angels** concerning you to **guard** you in all your ways; 12 they will lift you up in their hands, so that you will not strike your foot against a stone. 13 You will **tread on the lion and the cobra**; you will **trample the great lion and the serpent**. (Ps 91:9-13, NIV; Witherington, 76; Bock, 408; Garland, 50; Guelich, 39; France, 86; Strauss, 74)
- The Matthew and Luke accounts allude to this Scripture more explicitly since Satan quotes it (cf. Mt 4:5-6; Lk 4:10-11; Witherington, 76; Strauss, 74) — out of context!



## MARK 1:13

### GOOD, GODLY COMPANY

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- 3 Elijah was afraid and ran for his life. When he came to Beersheba in Judah, he left his servant there, 4 while he himself went a day's journey into the **wilderness**. He came to a broom bush, sat down under it and prayed that he might die. "I have had enough, Lord," he said. "Take my life; I am no better than my ancestors." 5 Then he lay down under the bush and fell asleep. All at once an **angel** touched him and said, "Get up and eat." 6 He looked around, and there by his head was some bread baked over hot coals, and a jar of water. He ate and drank and then lay down again. 7 The **angel of the Lord** came back a second time and touched him and said, "Get up and eat, for the journey is too much for you." 8 So he got up and ate and drank. Strengthened by that food, **he traveled forty days and forty nights** until he reached Horeb, the mountain of God. (1 Ki 19:3-8, NIV; UBS, 34; Witherington, 81; Bock, 408; Schnabel, 47; Lane, 61; Guelich, 39; Stein, 65)

# MARK 1:13

## GOOD, GODLY COMPANY

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- The word translated **serve** (διακονέω | *diakoneō*) means “to... minister, help” (NIDNTTE, 701) and here likely refers to “providing care” (EDNT, 302).
- Originally this described waiting on someone at a table; later referred to any kind of service in general (UBS, 34 cf. Lk 12:37, 17:8, Ac 6:2; Stein, 65)
- Mark does not mention fasting like Matthew (Mt 4:2) and Luke (Lk 4:2). Yet, here the angels’ service likely entails providing food (UBS, 34; Schnabel, 47; cf. Mt 4:11; France, 88; Stein, 65)
- Jesus would not need to be attended to if he was in paradise! (Edwards, 41)
- There is a depiction of Satan and wild animals on one side, with Jesus and the angels on the other (France, 83, 86)
- The spiritual battle will continue throughout Mark (Strauss, 74) – and it continues even today!
- Nonetheless, as we see here, Jesus, the Stronger One, is stronger than Satan! (Stein, 66)





# CONCLUSION

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- “Jesus’ ministry is bracketed by **temptation** – In the **wilderness** vs. in the **Garden of Gethsemane**); by **baptism** – in the **water** and on the **cross**; and by the **empowerment of God** – after coming **out of the water** vs. after coming **out of the grave** (Witherington, 79)
- The prologue prepares readers for both the tragedies and triumphs that follow (Witherington, 79)
- There are many scriptural allusions in Mark – even when Scripture is not cited explicitly (“Have you not read”? Mk 2:25, 12:26; Witherington, 79).
- With God, greatness can come from what the world considers insignificant (cf. 1 Cor 1:27-29; English, 41)
- Tableau of the Trinity (cf. Mt 28:19; Witherington, 75; English, 44; Cole, 108). We must rely on the power of the Holy Spirit (Strauss, 75)
- God may put us to the test, but He gives us the resources to persevere (Witherington, 81)
- Regardless, of what others may think about Jesus **God has spoken** (Kernaghan, 38; Schnabel, 44; France, 79). Jesus is the “Stronger One” John the Baptist spoke about (Bock, 409; Guelich, 35). Jesus is confirmed as the royal Messiah, the Suffering Servant, and the unique Son of God (Schnabel, 47)
- Again, Mark has shared the messianic mystery with readers, but the characters in the narrative will struggle with Christ’s identity (Witherington, 79; English, 47; Garland, 55; Schnabel, 44; Brooks, 42)
- We have more knowledge than they do; will we have more faith? (Garland, 55)