

Bible Reading for Today – Mark Ch 1: (Highlighted with the outworking of the Holy Spirit)

Mark 1 New International Version - UK (NIVUK)

John the Baptist prepares the way

1 The beginning of the good news about Jesus the Messiah,^(a) the Son of God,^(b) **2** as it is written in Isaiah the prophet:

'I will send my messenger ahead of you,

who will prepare your way'^(c) –

3 'a voice of one calling in the wilderness,

"Prepare the way for the Lord,

make straight paths for him."^(d)

(Holy Spirit – Working to fulfil the words of Scripture – Malachi 3:1 and Isaiah 40:3)

4 And so John the Baptist appeared in the wilderness, preaching a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins. **5** The whole Judean countryside and all the people of Jerusalem went out to him. Confessing their sins, they were baptised by him in the River Jordan. **6** John wore clothing made of camel's hair, with a leather belt round his waist, and he ate locusts and wild honey. **7** And this was his message: 'After me comes the one more powerful than I, the straps of whose sandals I am not worthy to stoop down and untie. **8** I baptise you with^(e) water, but he will baptise you with^(f) the Holy Spirit.'

(Holy Spirit – Baptism is not just to cleanse, but to be filled with the Spirit – enabled and empowered to be fully who you were created to be)

The baptism and testing of Jesus

9 At that time Jesus came from Nazareth in Galilee and was baptised by John in the Jordan.

(Holy Spirit – Jesus following the leading of the Spirit to go to John for His own baptism)

¹⁰ 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.

(Holy Spirit – The person of God not at arms length, but as close as our very breath, giving birth to a New Creation – see Gen 8:11 and also Ezekiel ch37:9-10)

¹¹ And a voice came from heaven: 'You are my Son, whom I love; with you I am well pleased.'

(The Great Commission of Jesus – King and Suffering Servant – see notes on Psalm 2 and Isaiah 53 above – but note the amazing Creative work and mind of God of how to enable salvation of the world - the work of the Spirit)

¹² At once the Spirit sent him out into the wilderness, ¹³ and he was in the wilderness for forty days, being tempted^[a] by Satan. He was with the wild animals, and angels attended him.

(Holy Spirit – Leads Jesus into the wilderness where through trial and testing His vision and focus are clarified – to preach and announce the Kingdom of God.)

Jesus announces the good news

¹⁴ After John was put in prison, Jesus went into Galilee, proclaiming the good news of God. ¹⁵ 'The time has come,' he said. 'The kingdom of God has come near. Repent and believe the good news!'

(Holy Spirit – enabling Jesus to announce and proclaim the Kingdom and to call all who may listen)

Jesus calls his first disciples

¹⁶ As Jesus walked beside the Sea of Galilee, he saw Simon and his brother Andrew casting a net into the lake, for they were fishermen. ¹⁷ 'Come, follow me,' Jesus said, 'and I will send you out to fish for people.' ¹⁸ At once they left their nets and followed him.

(Holy Spirit – Enabling Jesus to identify potential disciples – the work of an evangelist)

¹⁹ When he had gone a little farther, he saw James son of Zebedee and his brother John in a boat, preparing their nets. ²⁰ Without delay he called them, and they left their father Zebedee in the boat with the hired men and followed him.

Jesus drives out an impure spirit

²¹ They went to Capernaum, and when the Sabbath came, Jesus went into the synagogue and began to teach. ²² The people were amazed at his teaching, because he taught them as one who had authority, not as the teachers of the law.

(Holy Spirit – Working through Jesus to teach)

²³ Just then a man in their synagogue who was possessed by an impure spirit cried out, ²⁴ ‘What do you want with us, Jesus of Nazareth? Have you come to destroy us? I know who you are – the Holy One of God!’

²⁵ ‘Be quiet!’ said Jesus sternly. ‘Come out of him!’ ²⁶ The impure spirit shook the man violently and came out of him with a shriek.

²⁷ The people were all so amazed that they asked each other, ‘What is this? A new teaching – and with authority!’

(Holy Spirit – Working through Jesus to drive out demons and restore peace/Shalom to life)

He even gives orders to impure spirits and they obey him.’ ²⁸ News about him spread quickly over the whole region of Galilee.

Jesus heals many

²⁹ As soon as they left the synagogue, they went with James and John to the home of Simon and Andrew. ³⁰ Simon’s mother-in-law was in bed with a fever, and they immediately told Jesus about her. ³¹ So he went to her, took her hand and helped her up. The fever left her and she began to wait on them.

³² That evening after sunset the people brought to Jesus all who were ill and demon-possessed. ³³ The whole town gathered at the door, ³⁴ and Jesus healed many who had various diseases. He also drove out many demons, but he would not let the demons speak because they knew who he was.

(Holy Spirit – enabling the first of many healing miracles in Mark Gospel)

Jesus prays in a solitary place

³⁵Very early in the morning, while it was still dark, Jesus got up, left the house and went off to a solitary place, where he prayed.

(Holy Spirit – enabling Jesus to seek solitude, to be alone with God one-on-one in prayer)

³⁶Simon and his companions went to look for him, ³⁷and when they found him, they exclaimed: ‘Everyone is looking for you!’

³⁸Jesus replied, ‘Let us go somewhere else – to the nearby villages – so that I can preach there also. That is why I have come.’

(Holy Spirit – enabling Jesus not simply to seek popularity or status, but focus on what He came to do and to be)

³⁹So he travelled throughout Galilee, preaching in their synagogues and driving out demons.

Jesus heals a man with leprosy

⁴⁰A man with leprosy^a came to him and begged him on his knees, ‘If you are willing, you can make me clean.’

⁴¹Jesus was indignant.^b He reached out his hand and touched the man. ‘I am willing,’ he said. ‘Be clean!’ ⁴²Immediately the leprosy left him and he was cleansed.

⁴³Jesus sent him away at once with a strong warning: ⁴⁴‘See that you don’t tell this to anyone. But go, show yourself to the priest and offer the sacrifices that Moses commanded for your cleansing, as a testimony to them.’

(Holy Spirit – enabling Jesus to see the bigger picture, it was not just the man with Leprosy who needed healing, it was also about enabling the whole work of the institutions, not least of religion, to glimpse who indeed was in their midst and to change)

⁴⁵Instead he went out and began to talk freely, spreading the news. As a result, Jesus could no longer enter a town openly but stayed outside in lonely places. Yet the people still came to him from everywhere.

Footnotes:

- a. [Mark 1:1](#) Or *Jesus Christ. Messiah* (Hebrew) and *Christ* (Greek) both mean *Anointed One*.
- b. [Mark 1:1](#) Some manuscripts do not have *the Son of God*.

- c. [Mark 1:2](#) Mal. 3:1
- d. [Mark 1:3](#) Isaiah 40:3
- e. [Mark 1:8](#) Or *in*
- f. [Mark 1:8](#) Or *in*
- g. [Mark 1:13](#) The Greek for *tempted* can also mean *tested*.
- h. [Mark 1:40](#) The Greek word traditionally translated *leprosy* was used for various diseases affecting the skin.
- i. [Mark 1:41](#) Many manuscripts *Jesus was filled with compassion*