

# OTT Sunday School Lessons

## TEACHER'S NOTES

### Lesson 2: Mark 1:1-13

Although there is some debate about how to outline Mark's book, the first 13 verses are often described as the prologue or introduction. Some commentators say the introductory comments stop at verse 8 while other say Mark's introduction carries on to verse 15. Ultimately, how we outline another person's writing should not interfere with our quest to find the intended meaning of what the person wrote. Outlines are helpful for organizing the material but should not be an obstacle for understanding the material. Thus, we will not make much effort to present or defend a precise outline. We will attempt to study the text in natural segments. For our present study, we see the prologue as including the first 13 verses so we will examine these first.

In this opening section, Mark's primary purpose is to inform his readers about Jesus and the beginning of his Gospel message. Describing Jesus is actually a major reason why Mark wrote. Robert Stein recognizes that "Mark is not primarily a collection of Jesus's teachings . . . it is rather a Gospel concerning the person, deeds and acts of Jesus. . . Mark is certainly not devoid of information concerning what Jesus taught, but it concentrates primarily on who Jesus is and what he did."<sup>1</sup> Mark wants to help his readers know Jesus better. Knowing Jesus more and more is a key to successful discipleship and this section sets the tone for Mark's objectives in his writing.

### **Mark and the Other Gospels**

Compared to the other Gospels, Mark's introduction is the shortest. Matthew and Luke's introductory material includes genealogies and birth narratives. John begins his Gospel with a theological discussion explaining Jesus. Mark, after a brief reference to Old Testament prophecy, moves immediately into the story of Jesus launching his ministry as an adult with just a short mention of the preparatory work of John the Baptist. Mark seems to be writing with an urgency; he wants to get his readers quickly into the story and ultimately to the cross.

While the story of the actual baptism of Jesus is very similar in size and content to Matthew and Luke, Mark's discussion of John the Baptist's ministry before Jesus' baptism and the temptation of Jesus after the baptism are both shorter than Matthew and Luke. Luke and Matthew include many more details in their introductory chapters.

### **Overview of the Text**

#### **Mark 1:1**

Mark describes the material in his book as "the beginning" of the Gospel. Mark sees the Gospel as an ongoing reality in the world. Gospel is not just a type of literature. It is a message of hope and repentance and salvation. It continues to impact the lives of all who believe and faithfully trust in Jesus. Thus, Mark indicates here that the story of the Gospel is not finished but continuously unfolding as it penetrates into new communities and individuals. Mark recognizes that his book does not contain all the Gospel but just the beginning of it. What he has written will help describe, encourage, and perpetuate an active, Gospel-based movement.

By growing up in a Jewish home, Mark was well aware that the book of Genesis begins with "in the beginning." The book describes God's initial work in creation and the establishment of relationship between God and mankind. However, Genesis did not contain all the story of God's interactions with his creation. God's is still involved with his creation. Perhaps Mark was seeking

---

<sup>1</sup> Robert H. Stein, *Baker Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament: Mark* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2008), 41.

to emulate that famous scriptural introduction and pattern the beginning of God's New Covenant work after the introduction of God's Old Covenant work.

The Gospel message in the New Covenant is completely connected to the person and work of Jesus who is both the Christ and the Son of God. Here, Mark is introducing two concepts which will be further explained in his writing. Mark is proclaiming (or foreshadowing) what the other characters in his story will eventually learn through the course of the book. Indeed, looking ahead we see a dramatic point in the story when the disciples finally recognize Jesus as the Christ in Mark 8:29. Mark also makes a point to include in his conclusion a confession that "surely this man was the son of God" in Mark 15:39. Thus, the claims that Mark is making in Mark 1:1 will be emphatically explained and defended throughout the rest of the book.

### **Mark 1:2-3**

Next, Mark draws our attention to Old Testament prophecy. The Gospel did not come without warning or preparation. God, through his prophets, had indicated in the Old Testament that a New Covenant, a Messiah, and the Gospel message would be coming. As Robert Stein writes that "Jesus's mission involves the fulfillment of the divine plan for history."<sup>2</sup> Even Jesus declares in Mathew 5:17, "'Do not think that I have come to abolish the Law or the Prophets; I have not come to abolish them but to fulfill them.'

The Old Testament is essential to Jesus and our understand of the New Covenant Gospel. Neither Jesus nor his disciples presented the Gospel as an alternative to the Old Testament. Rather, it was the culmination of the Old Testament. The Old Covenant does not exist in opposition to the Gospel but as the foundation of the Gospel. There are many Old Testament passages that were intended to prepare God's people to receive and accept the Gospel but Mark points to three here in Mark 1:2-3. Even though Mark only cites Isaiah, he is actually quoting from three Old Testament books. His emphasis on Isaiah is not an indication of his ignorance or confusion regarding the Old Testament. Rather, he sees Isaiah as the climax of Old Testament Messianic prophecies. In fact, the other scriptures quoted by Mark were often placed tougher with Isaiah in Jewish tradition.<sup>3</sup>

Mark's scripture quote, "I will send my messenger ahead of you, who will prepare your way" comes from Exodus 23:20 and Malachi 3:1. The following scripture quote, "A voice of one calling in the desert, 'Prepare the way for the Lord, make straight paths for him'" comes from Isaiah 40:3. The expectation of Israel, from Moses to the Prophets, is now realized in Christ Jesus and his herald (the announcer of Christ's coming), John the Baptist. As Robert Stein writ

### **Mark 1:4-8**

The Old Testament prophecy cited by Mark not only introduces Jesus and John, but also the setting for the "beginning of the Gospel." The good news message was launched from the wilderness. The concept of wilderness or desert is prominent both in the prophetic scriptures that Mark quoted and Mark's introduction. The promise of Exodus 23 was made in the desert between Egypt and the Promised Land. In the dangerous space between bondage and paradise, God promised to send a messenger and show them the way to salvation. Isaiah also proclaimed that the way of the Lord would be found or received in the wilderness. When John the Baptist carried out his ministry, it was not in the Temple of Jerusalem where his father ministered (Luke 1:8-10). It was in the wilderness. Now, as Jesus prepared to launch his ministry, he beings not in the holy city of Jerusalem or the imperial capital of Rome. He goes out into the desert where he finds John, gets baptized, receives audible confirmation from God, receives the Holy Spirit, gets tempted by the devil, and is ministered to by angels. All of this happens in the wilderness.

The Greek word used for desert in this section (Mark 1:3, 4, 12, 13) is ἔρημος (*eremos*). The word does not refer to the natural environment or ecological aspects of the wilderness or the desert. Rather, this word conveys the desolation and solitude that one would find in the desert. It was not a

---

<sup>2</sup> Robert H. Stein, *Baker Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament: Mark* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2008), 43.

<sup>3</sup> Robert H. Stein, *Baker Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament: Mark* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2008), 39.

comfortable place to be. The desert was uninhabited by most humans. It was harsh and dangerous. Mark emphasizes this in a way no other Gospel writer does by describing Jesus as being with the wild beasts (Mark 1:13). Jesus was in a hostile place where normal people would fear for their lives.

We might find it odd that someone who wished to promote the Gospel would highlight its desert origins. This religious movement arose not from a prominent city or an elaborate temple but from a harsh wilderness. Yet wilderness experiences were not uncommon for Israel. When God saved Israel from captivity in Egypt, he carried them through a desert to the Promised Land. When Israel rebelled against God along the way, he caused them to remain in the wilderness for 40 years so another generation could prepare to follow God faithfully. After Israel has been established in the Promised Land, they again rebelled against God and worshipped idols. God responded by sending enemy empires to overthrow them and send them in the exile. In these places of deserts of defeat, God gave the promise of the Messiah and redemption. The Old Testament prophets were often found in the wilderness. They also compared the nation of Israel to a desert. Indeed, even in the time John and Jesus, although the people of Israel were living in their Promised Land, they existed in a spiritual desert. Jesus came not only into the world he created; he went right into the desert for the sake of humanity.

Although Mark does not write about John the Baptist's history, we know from Luke 1 that John was born in the home of a Jewish priest. His birth was quite miraculous and he was peculiar even from birth. His father named him John against the wishes of his family and neighbors. They protested this odd name but the parents insisted because of the clear instructions they had been given by the angel Gabriel in Luke 1:13. John did not go onto serve in the Jerusalem Temple as his father did. Rather, he chose to live and minister in the desert, away from the general population. They had to go out to him in the wilderness to hear his message and receive his baptism service. Nevertheless, his ministry was quite popular and many from Jerusalem and the greater region of Judea went out to find him. (Mark's assessment that "all the people" went to him is an overstatement indicating that many people did go out to seek John the Baptist.) His clothing and eating habits were peculiar as well. Mark tells us that he wore a garment made of camel's hair and fastened with a leather belt. This was also Elijah's clothing of choice as seen in 2 Kings 1:8. This direction comparison was intentional as we see it happening again in Mark 9:13 as well as in Matthew 17:11-12; Luke 1:17; and John 1:25. Elijah was one of the greatest of Israel's historical prophets. His wonderful record of his life concluded with a dramatic exit from the earth in a chariot of fire (2 Kings 2:11). The nature of Elijah's departure led some Jewish religious leaders to consider and teach that Elijah would return. We see this expressed clearly in Mark 9:11. Jesus confirms that John the Baptist does serve to fulfill this teaching. John the Baptist is not, however, the reincarnation of Elijah or the literal Elijah (John 1:21). Rather, as Gabriel explained to John's father in Luke 1:17, John will operate "in the spirit and power of Elijah." John's prophetic ministry will be like that of Elijah's in power and significance. Thus, John's clothing was an obvious visual connection most likely intended to emphasize to the people of Israel that a prophet of the same importance of Elijah had come to them. Based on the popularity of John's ministry, the people obviously recognized the significance of this man.

Mark also mentions John's diet. He ate locusts and wild honey. This would be the expected diet of a man living off the land in the wilderness. In Leviticus 11:22, locusts were listed among the few insects that Jews were permitted to eat. In the Old Testament, locust swarms were described as powerful forces able to consume the produce of Israel (Deuteronomy 28:42; Psalm 105:34-35; Joel 1:4). Yet with John the Baptist, it's the prophet of Israel who consumes the locusts for nourishment to minister to Israel.

John's popularity may also have had something to do with the fact that Israel has not heard a genuine prophetic voice for nearly 400 years. In John, they heard and saw what they recognized to be an authentic prophet from God.

John's message in Mark was completely preparatory. He was "preparing the way of the Lord." His ministry represented a final effort to prepare Israel to receive and accept the Messiah.

The prophets before John has also participated in the preparatory work but John comes as the herald announcing that the time has now fully come. John encouraged individuals Jews to prepare themselves for the Messiah by repenting and being baptized. We will examine the issue of repentance further below but in general, John saw a need for the people to turn from their current, wicked ways and move towards God in order to receive forgiveness of sins. The outward expression of their inward repentance was water baptism. John's call to baptism was quite unique in Israel. Although converts to Judaism were instructed to be baptized (among other rituals) there are few examples of Jewish people being baptized except for the various ceremonial washings or cleansings that would periodically take place. John seems to be a new and dramatic thing in the Jordan River. Perhaps that is why he became known as "the baptist" or "the baptizer."

Finally, the only quote from John's preaching (other than his sermon against Herod in Mark 6:18) is found in Mark 1:7-8. This is obviously a summary of John's message and it can be divided into three points:

1. One greater than me is coming
2. I baptize with water
3. He will baptize with the Holy Spirit

First, John describes his purpose as preparing the people to receive the one who is coming chronologically (in time) after him. John's appearance happens first not because he is greater but because his role is to prepare the way of the Lord. The way is actually found in a person, Jesus, who is greater than John. John usually vivid imagery to describe how Jesus is greater than John in Mark 1:7: "I am not worthy to stoop down and untie" his sandals. The job of taking off a master's sandals was one of the lowliest tasks that could be assigned. In fact, Jewish tradition taught that Jewish servants should not be assigned this task as it was too humiliating. Yet for Jesus, John is not worth to do that lowliest of tasks. The value of Jesus surpasses that of any other human being for he is not only the Son of Man but also the Son of God.

Second, John describes the method he employs to prepare the people to receive Jesus, that is water baptism. As mentioned above, this was an outward demonstration of repentant heart. To be baptized by John in the Jordan River meant that a person recognized his or her sinfulness, felt sorrow for sins, and desired to go a different way - the way of the Lord. This work, however, was not the end of the journey towards God but just the first steps. In Christian tradition since the book of Acts, believers are baptized after receiving Jesus as Lord and Savior. John's baptism, however, was preparation for salvation, not a response to salvation. Nevertheless, receiving the baptism of John did indicate that the hearts of some people were inclined towards God and aware of their need to be saved. This was actually the greater purpose of the Old Testament Law. Paul indicates that the Law was given to make humanity aware of both their great sin and their great need for God (Romans 3:20; Galatians 3:19). Repentance and water baptism revealed that a person has come to understand that they are unable to keep the law and in need of a savior to deliver them. Ultimately, then, the forgiveness of sins comes as a result of people putting their faith and trust in Jesus as their savior.

Third, John says that Jesus will do a greater work than John for Jesus will operation with the Holy Spirit. Mark 1:8 says, "but he will baptize you with the Holy Spirit." Based on the context, baptism "with the Holy Spirit" here refers not exclusively to the Spirit Baptism as seen on the day of Pentecost in Acts 2 but also to the work of salvation which John 3:5-8 describes as being born again by the Spirit. John's human work of preach and the audience own work of repentance and baptism is only a glimpse of the Spirit empowered preaching, salvation, and baptism that will come through Jesus. John is anticipating a Spirit-empowered ministry with greater works and eternal implications and he wants his audience to share in his anticipation.

### **Mark 1:9-11**

In Mark 1:9, we see Jesus traveling down from the town of Nazareth in Galilee to find John in the desert. We do not know the exact location of John's desert ministry and perhaps he moved from place to place in the desert and along the Jordan River. However, many point towards a

location southeast of Jerusalem as the place where John baptized due to the depth of the river being deeper as it flows south towards the Dead Sea. Jesus may have traveled as far as 140 kilometers to reach John from Nazareth. Luke 3:23 tells us that Jesus was about 30 years old when he made this journey and launched his ministry.

We know from Matthew 3:14 that John did not want to baptize Jesus at first. Mark does not record John's hesitation but we can understand John's position. John did not feel worthy to even remove Jesus' shoes, how could he be qualified to baptize Jesus. Yet Jesus insisted and John baptized him. Jesus did not need baptism for the same reasons as the other people coming to John. Jesus was sinless. Jesus was baptized not to demonstrate his repentance but to demonstrate his humility and obedience.

This baptism happened in the Jordan River which held great significance for Israel. The Israelites entered in the Promised Land by miraculously crossing the Jordan river while God held back the waters in Joshua 3-4. Many significant events in ancient Israel took place along or near the Jordan River. Both Elijah and Elisha parted the waters of the Jordan to demonstrate God's power (2 Kings 2:8, 14). Elisha also instructed a man to bathe in the Jordan to cure him from leprosy. Through the waters of the Jordan, God delivered Israel into the Promised Land. Jesus passed through the same waters as he prepared to deliver them once more. The waters didn't divide for Jesus like that has for Elijah or Elisha. Those ancient prophets crossed over and were dry. Jesus went and came out wet. Yet Jesus did not intend to demonstrate his power on that day in the Jordan River. Rather, he submitted in obedience to the plan of God to be baptized in the Jordan River.

When Jesus' baptism was complete, he emerged from the water to heavenly applause. Perhaps Elijah and Elisha parted the Jordan River but nothing like what happened to Jesus happened to them. Jesus saw the sky being "torn open." The Greek word that Mark used here is *σχίζω* (*schizo*) which can mean split, tear, separate, or even divide. Mark uses this verb only one other time in his Gospel. He wrote in Mark 15:38 that the curtain in the temple was torn (*σχίζω*) when Jesus died on the cross. Matthew and Mark also use this verb to describe what happened to the curtain in the temple but they do not use this verb in connection to Jesus' baptism and the heavens opening. Perhaps Mark wanted to convey that when the sky opened at Jesus' baptism, it was with a great deal of force or ferocity. When Jesus saw the tearing or splitting of heaven, it was of similar nature to the tearing of the temple curtain. It was not a gentle action. It's interesting that Mark both begins and ends his Gospel with something being torn open. Whether or not Mark intended it we can't be sure but since the word is used only twice in these particular places seems to indicate that Mark was aware of the literary connection. The Gospel begins with Jesus entering the world and humbling himself in total obedience in the desert and the Jordan River. His gracious action results in heaven being ripped open and God bursting forth onto the scene. Truly, in Jesus God has come to be with mankind. Then, after another gracious act of humility and total obedience on the cross, the curtain in the Jerusalem Temple is ripped in two, from the top to the bottom. This curtain had served as a physical representation of a spiritual division that existed between God and man. In the temple, the presence of God dwelled among but separate from humanity. No one was allowed to venture behind the curtain except for the High Priest and he could only go under strict regulation and only once each year. Yet when the eternal sacrifice of Jesus was made, the division between man and God was remedied and God vividly demonstrated this by ripping the curtain in the temple with the Holy Spirit bursting forth to dwell with all who believe. Sin created a division between God and mankind. The removal of the division begins with Jesus coming into the world and God ripping open the heavens to initiate redemption and then ripping open the curtain in the temple to confirm that indeed the division was removed. It is also interesting that after the heavens are torn open, the voice of God declared that Jesus is God's son. Then, when the temple curtain is torn apart, it was a Roman centurion who declared, "Surely this man was the Son of God" (Mark 15:39). After the sky was torn open, God proclaimed Jesus as his Son. After the curtain was ripped open, a pagan witness to the crucifixion realized it was true.

It is unclear if everyone gathered at the Jordan River saw this event. Mark seems to indicate that only Jesus saw this. However, we know that when a similar event happened at the

transfiguration (Matthew 17:1-6) those with Jesus did see and hear what Jesus saw and heard. We also know from John 1:32 that John at least saw the Spirit descending on Jesus like a dove after the baptism. Thus, it may be possible that those with Jesus by the Jordan, or at least John the Baptist, saw the heaven being torn open and heard the proclamation of God.

After the heavens were torn open, the Holy Spirit descends on Jesus “like a dove.” This does not indicate that the Spirit took the form of a dove but rather that the Spirit descended as a dove. The action, not the form, of the Spirit was dovelike. The violent opening the heavens was followed by the gentle and peaceful descending of the Spirit. Luke indicates that after this Jesus was “full of the Holy Spirit” (Luke 4:1). The terms Christ (from the Greek) and Messiah (from the Hebrew) were titles meaning “anointed one.” Jesus was now confirmed to be the anointed one, the Christ, the Messiah. Yet his anointing was not like the kings and priests of old. He was not anointed with oil but with the Spirit.

This wonderful scene ends with the voice of God proclaiming, “You are my Son, whom I love; with you I am well pleased.” This is very similar to what was declared by God at the Transfiguration (Matthew 17:5). Before we understand what this is, we must be clear about what this is not. First, this is not God informing Jesus of his identity. Jesus was aware of who he was and what he would do. Luke 2:49 indicates that Jesus was aware of his divine identity from his youth. This was not a declaration given to provide Jesus with information previously unknown to him. Second, this is not an indication that Jesus was merely a human who God designated for a special calling. Jesus is both fully God and fully human but throughout church history many misunderstandings or heresies have arisen that reject this truth. Some have held to an idea that Jesus was an upstanding man like Noah or Abraham who God chose for a specific calling and purpose. They say God anointed him at his baptism with a special spirit or ability and withdrew it just before his death on the cross so Jesus was born and died a human being but had divine anointing in between. This is also not supported by the rest of Scripture. John 1:1-3 makes it clear that Jesus existed from eternity past. His status as the “Son” is an eternal reality.

In summary, this proclamation is not informing Jesus about who he is or establishing Jesus as the Son of God (he has always been the Son and always knew it). Rather, this declaration is confirming the identity and mission of Jesus. Here we see that Jesus is not acting separate from God, he is in total unity with God. The New Testament Jesus is not the loving, gracious alternative to the angry, wrathful Old Testament Yahweh. The Father and the Son work in loving harmony to accomplish the same mission of God. Salvation by grace through faith in Jesus is indeed the plan of God.

We will discuss more about the Trinity below but here it is helpful to see how Mark 1:10-11 portray the Trinity in Scripture. It is true that the word “Trinity” does not appear in the Bible. This, however, does not mean that the concept of the Trinity is the invention of the church. Our understanding of the Trinity is our best attempt to comprehend and articulate the whole teaching of Scripture in regards to God. When we examine all of God’s Word, we must conclude that God is one deity who exists as three distinct persons. We do not worship three gods, we worship one God. Yet God has revealed himself as Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. These are not three different roles that God performs or three different jobs that God undertakes. The three are distinct yet eternally united as one. Here, in Mark 1:10-11 we see all three members of the Trinity together yet distinct in one glimpse. God the Son is coming up out of the water on earth while God the Father is declaring who he is from heaven as God the Holy Spirit moves between them.

### **Mark 1:12-13**

Shortly after Jesus’ baptism we find the Holy Spirit leading him further into the wilderness. This is probably the opposite of what the reader might expect. Having been baptized and announced with this glorious display, we might expect Jesus to march triumphantly to Jerusalem. Instead, he follows the leading of the Spirit into the desert. Jesus had an ear to hear the voice of the Spirit calling him into a difficult place and Jesus obeyed “immediately.”

Mark's report of this event is the shortest among the Synoptic Gospels. From Mark we learn that Jesus spent 40 days in the desert where he was tempted by Satan. During his time he was "with the wild animals and angels attended him." Both Matthew and Luke tell us that Jesus fasted during this time and became very hungry. Jesus, although he was fully God, also took on the flesh of man and became fully human. His human nature was like ours in every way, even to the point of feeling hungry and tired. He who never knew hunger hungered when he came to give himself for us. In these times of severe weakness, the enemy came to tempt him. Matthew and Luke both report that the first temptation of Jesus was the turn stones into bread. Jesus' first temptation was similar to mankind's first temptation. The enemy use food in both cases to tempt humans into disobedience. Adam and Eve failed to resist Satan's temptation and fell into sin. Jesus, however, resisted this temptation to misuse his power and deviate from the way of God. Jesus succeeded where the first humans failed. Matthew and Luke change the order of the next two temptation. Matthew says that Jesus next shown the temple in Jerusalem then finally a high mountain where he could see the world's kingdom. Luke says that Satan stood with Jesus on the high mountain and then at the top of the temple in Jerusalem. (John actually writes nothing about this event.) At the Jerusalem Temple, Jesus was tempted to throw himself down in order to make a spectacle of himself and gain the city's attention and acclaim. Jesus knew his mission was not to exalt himself with amazing deeds but led the multitudes into saving faith. As with the temptation to turn stones into bread, Jesus resisted the temptation to use his power and authority to benefit himself. On the high mountain Jesus was shown all the kingdom of the world. Satan knew that Jesus wanted the kingdoms of earth to come into the Kingdom of God. Satan offered Jesus a way to obtain the earth's kingdoms without having to suffer and die on the cross. Just bow to Satan and he will give them. Jesus knew, however, that those things which Satan gives can only last for a season while that which God gives will last for eternity. Jesus chose to obey God and receive an eternal reward rather than the temporary success of sin and Satan. Unfortunately, even many Christians are choosing even now to bow or submit to Satan in order to obtain quick success. Jesus demonstrates that we can resist the temptation. In each temptation, Satan presented Jesus with opportunities to benefit himself. Each time Jesus chose to submit to the Father's will and rebuked Satan with the Word of God.

Jesus was successful. He fell to neither the beasts of earth or hell. At the end of the ordeal he was cared for by angels. This was not the end of Jesus' temptation. Jesus was consistently tempted by Satan. Hebrews 4:15 says that Jesus was tempted in every way that humans are tempted. Yet he was without sin. He always resisted the temptation. Being tempted is not a sin. However, temptation is a method Satan uses to draw us into sin. James 1:14-15 describes temptation as a pulling that humans experience. The enemy or our own evil desire pull us away from God and toward evil. If we fail to resist, we will act upon our evil desires make even more desirous by temptation. When the desire is acted upon, it is sin. James goes on to say in James 4:7 that if we resist Satan and his temptation, we can be free from sin and Satan will flee from us. Simply being tempted is not a sin. It's a common human experience that even the sinless Jesus shared with humanity. Those who do not resist in the time of temptation, however, will commit sin when they act upon their selfish, evil desires. Jesus, in the power of the Holy Spirit, found the strength to resist the temptation and drive Satan away. The temptation was consistent but so was the power of the Spirit to resist.

## **Conclusion**

Many have seen Mark 1:1-13 as not only an introduction to Jesus and his Gospel but also a foreshadowing or outline for his book. After Jesus appears and is announced by God, he operates in the power of the Holy Spirit until his final showdown with Satan. Though Jesus is tempted to give up, he remains obedient until the end and thus achieves his goal and is exalted forever to be attended by the angels in glory.

Others have seen in Mark 1:1-13 a reflection of Adam and Eve. Adam and Eve are created by God and represent all of humanity. They are placed in a beautiful garden with rivers running through it. The wild beasts are there but not a threat to Adam and Eve. Satan enters in and sets out

to tempt Adam and Eve to disobey God. He succeeds and they fail. They are then driven from the Garden and from God's presence. Jesus also comes into God's creation on behalf of all humanity, He is sent into a desert, not a lush garden. In the desert, the wild beasts are dangerous and threatening. Satan enters to tempt Jesus. Yet Jesus resists and Satan fails. Jesus is then brought into the place where the angels of God attend him. Adam, living in perfect conditions, still managed to fail God and fall into sin. The consequences of Adam's failure are universal, we are all sinners and all humanity needs to be saved or else face eternal death. Jesus comes as a "second Adam" (Romans 5:12-19; 1 Corinthians 15:21-22) and the consequences of his success are also universal. Any and all who believe in him shall be saved and have eternal life. Mark's Gospel represents the beginning of that good news.