

INTERNATIONAL BIBLE LESSONS.

FIRST QUARTER: STUDIES IN MARK.

A. D. 26.]

LESSON I. THE MISSION OF JOHN THE BAPTIST.

[Jan. 6.]

Authorized Version.

Mark 1. 1-11.

(Commit to memory verses 6-8.)

1 The beginning of the gospel of Je'sus Christ, the Son of God.

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

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

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

5 And there went out unto him all the land of Ju-de'a, and they of Je-ru-sa-lem, and were all baptized of him in the river of Jor-dan, confessing their sins.

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;

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.

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

9 And it came to pass in those days, that Je'sus came from Naz'a-reth of Gal'i-lee, and was baptized of John in Jor-dan.

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

11 And there came a voice from heaven, saying, Thou art my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.

FORE-SHADOWED.



Revised Version.

1 The beginning of the gospel of Je'sus Christ, the Son of God.

2 Even as it is written in Isaiah the prophet, Behold, I send my messenger before thy face,

3 The voice of one crying in the wilderness, Make ye ready the way of the Lord, Make his paths straight;

4 John came, who baptized in the wilderness and preached the baptism of repentance unto remission

5 of sins. And there went out unto him all the country of Ju-da'a, and all they of Je-ru-sa-lem; and they were baptized of him in the river Jor'dan, confessing

6 their sins. And John was clothed with camel's hair, and had a leathern girdle about his loins, and did

7 eat locusts and wild honey. And he preached, saying, There cometh after me he that is mightier

8 than I, the latchet of whose shoes I am not worthy to stoop down and unloose. I baptized you with

9 water; but he shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost.

10 And it came to pass in those days, that Je'sus came from Naz'a-reth of Gal'i-lee, and was baptized of John

11 in the Jor'dan. And straightway coming up out of the water, he saw the heavens rent asunder, and the

12 Spirit as a dove descending upon him; and a voice came out of the heavens, Thou art my beloved Son, in thee I am well pleased.

INDUCTIVE NOTES.

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I. Study of General Features.

[REMARKS.—1. Lesson notes are of value to those who use them only in proportion as they provoke independent study and personal reflection. The effort will therefore be made, especially in this section of the comments, to give direction and stimulus in study rather than to furnish information. 2. A strict following of directions in every particular is earnestly asked for, as the method of study suggested, with that condition met, will be found to be economical in time, and very fruitful in results. Not less than an average of two hours of the closest application should be given to each of these lessons. 3. The student will derive peculiar profit from wise use of the pen, as suggested below. 4. The Revised Version of the New Testament is quoted in the Notes. 5. Let the student provide himself with one or more copies of the five-cent edition of the Revised New Testament, which may be freely marked and cut.]

SEC. 1. What is a 'gospel'? (1) Reflect, and try to frame an answer. (2) Search for the elements of a definition, covering (a) subject-matter (Acts 1. 1); (b) authorship (John 21. 24; Luke 1. 2, 3); (c) design (John 20. 31; Luke 1. 4). (3) Write out the definition. It should have a form like the following (*Do not copy*).

A gospel is an account of the deeds and teachings of Jesus of Nazareth written by an eye-witness or the contemporary of an eye-witness, having for its design the production of belief in Jesus as the Son of God and Saviour of the world.

[N. B. Do not accept this definition except so far as it agrees with your own conclusions from meditation and from a study of the references given.] (4) Keeping the definition in mind, read what we may call two brief oral gospels, one by Peter in Acts 10, 36-43 and one by Paul in Acts 13. 23-33. (5) Apply and test your definition as to (a) and (c) by a rapid glance through the entire gospel of Mark.

SEC. 2. Recalling (a) subject-matter and (b) the design of a gospel, determine why this section (chap. 1. 1-11) on the mission of John the Baptist could not well

have been omitted from Mark's gospel. Do you find a section like this in the other gospels?

SEC. 3. Who is the chief person in the lesson? Ver. 4. Underscore (or write down) the words which describe (a) what he did: thus, ver. 4, "John came," "baptized," "preached repentance;" ver. 6, "was clothed," etc.; ver. 7, 8, "preached: There cometh . . . One . . . mightier . . . and . . . worthier;" (b) what others did: ver. 5, "All Judea went out unto him;" ver. 9, "Jesus came," "was baptized of John;" ver. 10, "Spirit descended;" ver. 11, "voice came out of the heavens." Give the substance of the answer (a) in your own language, somewhat as follows: John came baptizing and preaching repentance; he dressed like a prophet and foretold Christ's coming. State (b) thus: The authority of John's preaching was recognized by all classes of people and by Jesus, and the truth of his prophecy was confirmed by the miraculous descent of the Spirit and the voice of God declaring the divine Sonship of Jesus.

SEC. 4. Study the prophecy, vers. 2, 3. What does it say (c) is going to happen? Underscore the words which describe the main fact, thus: "It is written . . . I send messenger before thy face." Translate into your own words, "Prophecy promises that Christ shall have a forerunner." Underscore words describing subordinate facts, thus: "Shall prepare," "crying in wilderness," "make ye ready." Complete the statement thus: Who shall prepare his way, preaching preparation in the wilderness.

SEC. 5. Observe points of agreement between (a) and (b), that is, what did happen (c) what prophecy said would happen. Notice punctuation of Rev. Ver., vers. 2-4, and see how it binds (c) to (a) and (b).

SEC. 6. Study verse 1. Mark leading words, (a) "beginning of gospel." Put into other words; thus, Here is set down the first item of gospel truth. What has (d) to do with (a), (b), and (c)? Is it not this: What has item of gospel truth is that John was Christ's divinely appointed forerunner?

SEC. 7. Fuse the four great thoughts of the lesson into one brief sentence, in Mark's order: (1) (d), (a), (b) thus:

The first truth which the Gospel presents is that John in fulfillment of prophecy prepared Christ's way by