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THE Teachers' Preparation Leaflet

LESSON 6.

AUGUST 5th, 1894.

3rd QUARTER.

The Baptism of Jesus. Mark I : I-II.

GOLDEN TEXT: "Thou art my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased."
Mark I : II.

COMMIT TO MEMORY verses 9-II. Children's Hymnal 23, 62, 63, 64.

PROVE THAT—We should confess our sins to God, 1 John I : 9.

SHORTER CATECHISM—Quest. 87. What is repentance unto life?

DAILY PORTIONS.

(The Selections of the International Bible Reading Association.)

MONDAY.	TUESDAY.	WEDNESDAY.	THURSDAY.	FRIDAY.	SATURDAY.	SABBATH
—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Mark 1: 1-11	Matt. 3: 7-17	John 1: 15-28	John 1: 29-34	Acts 2: 36-41	Rom. 6: 1-11	2 Pet. 1: 16-21

To the Teacher—Do not credit any Scholar with having prepared the lesson who does not at least try to answer the questions. Take the leaflet home and assign a value to each answer, announcing the result on the following Sabbath. *Take, or send, the Leaflet to absent scholars.*

**Always bring your Bible and Shorter Catechism to
the Sabbath School.**

HELPS IN STUDYING.

INTRODUCTORY.—Mark, writing for the gentile Roman, begins at once with the public ministry of Christ. Review the events of his life as far as we have read them. Assuming that Christ was thirty years old (Luke 3 : 23), his baptism may have taken place in January, A. D. 27.

LESSON PLAN. I. The Prophets Foretelling. vs. 1-3. II. The Herald Proclaiming. vs. 4-8. III. The Spirit Descending. vs. 9-11.

I. THE PROPHETS FORETELLING. 1. The first verse stands as the title of the Gospel. The second and third may be compared to the quotations often placed on the title pages. Compare Matt. 1: 1, also the liturgical sentence often used before the reading of the scripture, "Here beginneth." Mark begins at once with the public life of Christ and this dates from his baptism. His notice of John is simply to introduce this event. Then first the gospel, properly speaking, began to be proclaimed in Jesus. **Gospel**—The good news which has the life and work of Jesus for its subject matter. **Jesus**—His personal name. **Christ**—"Messiah" his official title. **Son of God**—his essential nature. The second person of the Trinity.

2. The prophets—R. V. "in Isaiah." The quotations are from both Malachi and Isaiah, but since the latter is better known and oftener quoted, and his prophecy is the more important one, Mark mentions his name only. It is not at all likely to have been a mistake of memory. Mark was a Jew of Jerusalem and a companion in labor, first of Paul and then of Peter. In writing such an important work as his Gospel he would "verify his references." (Riddle.) **Behold I send**—Mal. 3: 1. Here the messenger is identified with John the Baptist, and the Angel of the covenant with Jesus. This prophecy is now fulfilled.

3. **The voice**—Isa. 40: 3-5. In Isaiah, Jesus is called God. This passage is quoted by all evangelists. **Prepare ye the way**—R. V. "make ye ready the way." The figure is drawn from the custom of oriental monarchs and great men. When one of these intends to travel from place to place, runners are sent out in advance to announce his coming and gangs of laborers are at once set to work to make the road passable. This is the only "statute

labor" that is ever expended upon them. John prepared the way for Christ by announcing his speedy advent; awakening the people to conviction of sin and their need of salvation; arousing a general interest in religion among all classes; and pointing out Christ when he appeared.

II. THE HERALD PROCLAIMING. 4. **John came** (R. V.)—Read the narrative of his birth in the first chapter of Luke. In Luke 1: 36 Elizabeth is called Mary's "kinswoman" (R. V.) hence John and Jesus were kinsmen. **In the wilderness**—"of Judea" (Matt. 3: 1) lying west of the Dead sea. It was not wholly uninhabited (Judges 1: 16; Josh. 15: 61,) but was chiefly devoted to grazing purposes. John extended his preaching tours to the valley of the Jordan (Luke 3: 3.) **Baptism of repentance**—the baptism which implied repentance as its prerequisite. It was a baptism of the old economy, not strictly Christian baptism. This carries with it an expression of faith in Christ. It here stands simply for a moral transformation according to the requirements of the law. (Meyer) The baptism of the Holy Ghost is necessary to complete the Christian idea. The word "baptize" in classic Greek means "to immerse," but in the New Testament it receives a technical sense and stands for the initiatory Christian rite and all that it implies, without any reference whatever to the mode in which it is performed. (For a clear exposition, and a trenchant defence, of the doctrine of our church in regard to the mode of baptism, see "Immersion, a Romish Invention," by Rev. W. A. McKay, D. D., Woodstock, Ont. It can be obtained from the author.) **Unto remission of sins** (R. V.)—(Luke 3: 3) i. e. "with a view to the remission of sins." This they have to receive from the Messiah. Repentance prepared them to receive it. "Never will Christ come into that soul where the herald of repentance hath not been before him." "Remission" is literally "the taking away" of sin. It is more than pardon, it is restoration to lost favor.

5. **All the land**—See Matt. 3: 5; Luke 3: 10-14. A vivid expression corresponding to our "everybody." Not literally true, but denoting his immense popularity and the remarkable effect of his preaching. **In the river Jordan**—Not necessarily immersed in it. The locality merely is pointed out. Compare "baptized in the wilderness" (Mark 1: 4) "in Bethabara" (John 1: 28) "in Enon" (John 3: 23.) The same preposition as is here rendered "in" is translated "at" in Eph. 1: 20, "at his own right hand." "The numbers that flocked to John's baptism made it physically impossible that he could have baptized them by dipping. It is said that all Jerusalem, all Judea, and all the region round about Jordan came and were baptized of him. We need not, of course, take the expression 'all' in its most literal sense as meaning all without exception; but it undoubtedly means a very large proportion of the people. It

is probable that the entire population of the district was about five millions, and if we suppose that even one-fifth of these were immersed, and that John's ministry lasted for a whole year, then he must have immersed 2,700 each day, which is an impossibility. Nor could any man live, standing day after day for a year, up to his waist in water. If, on the other hand, John baptized by sprinkling or pouring the thing was possible and easy. The unseemliness of the the sight makes it morally certain that John did not baptize by dipping. Few, if any would come prepared with suitable garments for the ceremony. How then could they be immersed? Either in a state of nudity, or in their ordinary clothes. Decency would forbid the former, and a due regard to health the latter." (McKay.) **Confessing their sins**—Prov. 28: 13; 1 John 1: 9. The place was Bethabara, or Bethany, (John 1: 28) five miles N. E. of Jericho. Here probably the Israelites first crossed into Canaan, and here the mantle of Elijah divided the waters. (2 Kings 2: 8, 14.)

* 6. **Camel's hair**—A coarse cloth made from the larger and coarser hairs, spun and woven like wool. A finer kind of cloth called *Camlet* is made from the soft hairs, and the name is retained by similar fabrics of silk and wool. This was Elijah's garb (2 Kings 1: 8.)

A leathern girdle (R. V.)—A belt of untanned skin. The dress of a common laborer. The rich wore sashes of silk or cotton, or girdles ornamented with gold and precious stones. John embodied the conventional idea of Elijah. His dress and food were in harmony with his stern preaching. **Locusts**—(Lev. 11: 22.) "I have seen at Medina and Tayf locust shops, where these animals were sold by measure. In Egypt and Nubia they are eaten only by the poorest beggars. The Arabs, in preparing locusts as an article of food, throw them alive into boiling water with which a good deal of salt has been mixed. After a few minutes they are taken out and dried in the sun; the head, feet, and wings are then torn off, the bodies are cleansed from the salt and perfectly dried, after which process whole sacks are filled by the Bedouin. They are sometimes eaten boiled in butter, and they often contribute materials for a breakfast when spread over unleavened bread mixed with butter." (Bruckhardt.) The conjectures of the older writers who, deeming this food unworthy of John, have substituted other things, deserve no consideration. (Meyer.) **Wild honey**—Abundant in Palestine (Ex. 3: 8; Judges 14: 5-9; 1 Sam. 14: 25, 26.) Generally understood to mean the honey of the wild bee, but others say that it means "tree-honey," an exudation from palms, figs and other trees. Meyer says that there was no such thing as "tame" honey, the common honey being that of the wild bee. Also that the name "wild honey" is given by ancient writers to the substance in question, but is never used to designate honey properly so called. This view is not generally adopted.

7. **Latchet**—diminutive of "latch," and

from the same root as *latic*. It was originally a plaited string. **Shoes**—The sandals of the ancients was a sole of leather, or other strong material, fastened around the ankle and between the toes by a string or thong. To put on, or take off the shoes, and to carry them was the duty of the humblest slaves. (Matt. 3: 11.) John preached Christ not himself.

8. With water—R. V. marg. "in." But there is no necessity for this alternative reading, and when it is applied to baptism by the Holy Spirit ("in" the Holy Ghost) it becomes ridiculous. The baptism of the Holy Ghost referred to occurred on the day of Pentecost, and on that occasion the Spirit was "poured out" (Acts 2: 17) "shed forth" (Acts 2: 33) and "falls upon" (Acts 11: 15) those who received his baptism. They were not immersed in the Holy Ghost! "Even baptists will acknowledge that anointing was not by immersion, but by pouring. Well, the Greek form of expression here used by John to denote his mode of baptism is precisely the same as is used in Old Testament Greek to express anointing. John says *en hudati* (with water,) and to express the mode of anointing we have no less than five times the expression *en elaiō* (with oil.) The passages are 2 Sam. 1: 21; Ps. 89: 20; Ps. 23: 5; Ps. 92: 10; Ezek. 16: 9. Anoint (*en*) with oil, and like expressions, where oil was poured, occur over forty times in the books of Moses in Greek. According to Baptist reasoning the anointed must have been immersed in oil!" (McKay.) John contrasts his baptism unto repentance, negative in its character, with that of Christ conferring salvation and inspiring with new life. His baptism is not even the emblem of Christ's. See Isa. 44: 3; Joel 2: 28. Matthew adds "and with fire" (3: 11, 12.) Mark does not dwell upon the severe tone of John's preaching and so omits this. His notice of John is merely introductory to the narrative of the baptism of Christ.

III. THE SPIRIT DESCENDING. 9. In those days—January A. D. 27. Another calculation, largely accepted as more correct, but which has not yet got into our commentaries, has been made by Mr. J. W. Bosanquet, According to him, Jesus was born in autumn B. C. 3 and was baptized in May or June A. D. 29, and was crucified in April A. D. 33, when between 34 and 35 years of age. (Lindsay) **Jesus came from Nazareth**—He emerges from obscurity, from the period of quiet preparation of thirty years. **Was baptized**—Matt. 3: 13-15. "He that was formerly circumcised would now be baptised. What is baptism but an evangelical circumcision? What was circumcision but a legal baptism? One both supplied and needed the other; yet the author of both will undergo both. He would be circumcised to satisfy his church that was, and baptised to sanctify his church that should be, that in both Testaments, he might open a way to

heaven." (Hall) As man he thus confessed the sins of his brethren whom he came to redeem; he set the seal of approval upon John's ministry; and received John's witness to his Messiahship; he furnished the occasion for his Father's testimony; and was solemnly consecrated to his work of salvation. Why did John hesitate to baptise Jesus? He knew his holy and blameless character, although he did not know him to be the Messiah. (John 1: 3.) There may have been given to him some dim prophetic anticipation of the coming sign from heaven. Luther says 'He scents the Spirit.'" (Meyer.) **In Jordan**—Here again locality merely and not immersion in the river is signified. The Greek preposition here used (*eis*) does not necessarily mean "into" as will be seen by the following passages in which it would be absurd to translate it thus. 2 Kings 2: 6 "into Jordan," 1 Kings 1: 33, 38 "into Gihon," (Gihon was a spring or pool, 2 Chr. 32: 38; 33: 14.) 2 Kings 6: 4 "into Jordan," Matt. 17: 27 "into the sea," John 11: 38 "into the grave," John 20: 4, 5 "into the sepulchre," "yet went he not in." *Eis* is translated "to" 530 times in the New Testament. It occurs 11 times in this chapter but is not once rendered "into."

10. Straightway—immediately. A favorite word with Mark. **Coming out of the water**—i. e. "coming up from the water." Compare Matt. 3: 16 where the R. V. reads correctly "went up straightway from the water." Here the Greek preposition is *ek*. In the N. T. it is translated 186 times by "from." In the Acts alone it is used 64 times and is translated "out of" only five times. The language of the evangelist describes our Saviour as coming to the edge of the river and it may be wading a little into the stream, but it does not imply that he was submerged by John beneath the water. There is not a single word in the narrative that suggests this. Only preconceived opinions would find this in the story. **He saw**—Jesus saw. John also saw. (John 1: 32, 33.) John tells us that he was praying (3: 21.) **The heavens opened**—R. V. "the heavens rent asunder." **Like a dove**—"in a bodily shape like a dove" (Luke 3: 22.) Symbolic of peace, purity and love. Some new relation is now established between Jesus and the Holy Spirit but the mystery of it is beyond us. This is his baptism by the Spirit but it is not immersion.

11. A voice—Apparently heard by John and Jesus only. This voice came three times in the earthly life of our Lord. (Mark 9: 7; John 12: 28.) Note the presence of all three persons of the Trinity. **From heaven**—R. V. "out of." But is not this an awkward rendering? The Greek preposition *ek* is here used. Why not translate it naturally, "from," as in 185 other places in the N. T.? **Thou art my beloved Son**—Ps. 2: 7. **I am well pleased**—"I have been and still am well pleased." His pre-existence is implied.

SUMMARY AND REVIEW.

By Rev. D. Stiles Fraser, B. A., Springfield, N. S.

It must be taken for granted that the facts of this lesson, as given in the four accounts, have been carefully arranged, and thoroughly studied by teachers and scholars, so that all will be as familiar with them as they should be with the points of the past five lessons. Now, there are two great truths standing out clearly above others in this lesson. Gather all around these truths.

I. THE DIVINITY OF JESUS CHRIST. Emphasize this by the following diagram:—

The **VOICE** of Prophecy, Isa. 40: 3; 61: 1.
of the "Messenger," Mal. 3: 1.
from Heaven, Mark 1: 11.

all pointing to

JESUS CHRIST.—the Son of God.

Here we have the *Bible Message* about CHRIST preached by the "Messenger" and approved by God by the PRESENCE OF HIS HOLY SPIRIT. You are God's Messenger to your class. Let your VOICE direct the attention of those who hear you to Christ. Take as your motto the words of the "Messenger"—"He must increase, but I must decrease." (John 3: 30.) Hide self, and show JESUS CHRIST, THE SON OF GOD, the Only Saviour of Sinners.

II. ONE GOD IN THREE PERSONS.—THE TRINITY. This doctrine is one of the great mysteries of God. Do not try to explain it. Believe it; and impress on the minds and hearts of your scholars the fact that here three persons are brought before us in the picture.

One God manifested in Three Persons.

GOD the Father, speaking from heaven,
the Spirit, descending, as a dove, upon
the Son, praying at his baptism.

Ten Minutes Normal Drill

Based on the text-book, "The Sabbath School Teacher's Handbook; or, The Principles and Practice of Teaching, with special reference to the Sabbath School," and prepared by Principal Kirkland of the Toronto Normal School.

THE QUALIFICATIONS OF THE IDEAL SABBATH SCHOOL TEACHER.

(Continued.)

V. **A Sabbath School Teacher should always be a learner.**—As soon as a teacher ceases to be a systematic student, he ceases to be an effective teacher. Pupils should not be asked to drink from a stagnant pool but from a living fountain.

VI. **Patience and self-control are of prime importance in the Sabbath School Teacher.**—In order to control and influence others we must first be able to control ourselves.

VII. **A teacher must know the nature of childhood and be able and ready to sympathize with child-nature.**—A sabbath school teacher should know the nature of the faculties which he is to develop and train, and the order in which these faculties are developed. The wisest training will be directed to these powers that are conspicuously active at this time.

Read pages 29-33 of the Text Book.