

Pentwater Bible Church

Gospel of Mark

Message 3

March 30, 2014



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Pentwater Bible Church

The Book of Mark
Message Three
Jesus Begins His Ministry
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Jesus Tempted in the Wilderness by James Tissot, Cir. 1886-1894

THE BEGINNING OF THE MINISTRY OF JESUS

Mark 1:9-13

⁹ And it came to pass in those days, that Jesus came from Nazareth of Galilee, and was baptized of John in Jordan. 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. ¹² And immediately the Spirit driveth him into the wilderness. ¹³ And he was there in the wilderness forty days, tempted of Satan; and was with the wild beasts; and the angels ministered unto him (KJV).

THE BAPTISM

Mark 1:9

⁹ And it came to pass in those days, that Jesus came from Nazareth of Galilee, and was baptized of John in Jordan (KJV).

In Mark's typical abruptness he announces the baptism of Jesus. After approximately thirty years living obscurely in Nazareth He makes His first public appearance. It is not made clear what prompted Him to start His ministry, but the foreordained time had come. He was born in Bethlehem (Hebrew for house of bread) but was raised in Nazareth.

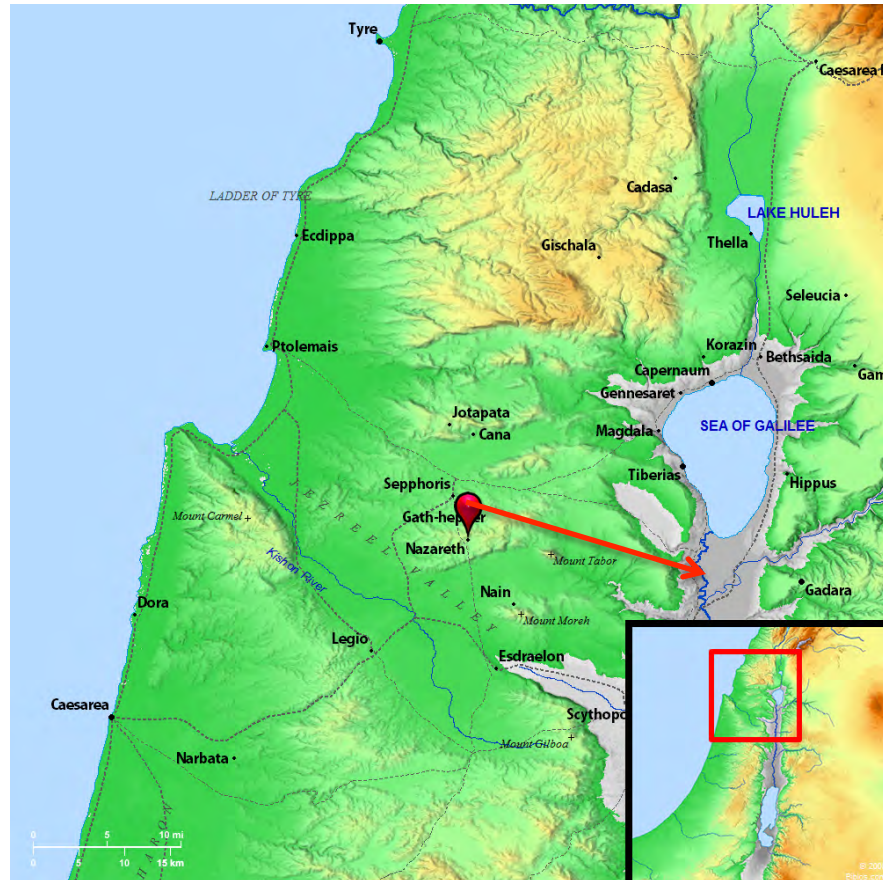


Image by Bible Atlas.org

The village of Nazareth proper was never mentioned in the Old Testament or the Jewish Talmud. Josephus the first century Jewish historian does not mention it in any of his writings either. Nazareth is based on the Hebrew term netzer, which means branch, and Matthew's Gospel says that this was the fulfillment of a prophecy (Isaiah 11:1), that the Messiah would be called the Nazarene (Matthew 2:23), the branch of Jesse. The general consensus of the time of Jesus was that Nazareth was not a very desirable town for the Jews. The Romans had a garrison for their northern regions of Galilee there. King Herod also built a palace in nearby Sepphoris during the time Jesus was growing up. According to Josephus, Herod Antipas (Herod the Great's son) established two capitals: Tiberias, on the Sea of Galilee, and Sepphoris, some four miles from Nazareth in the hill country of Lower Galilee. Josephus said Antipas made Sepphoris the "ornament of the Galilee," and that it was well fortified militarily. He further said that it took 30 years to build.¹

¹ Josephus, F., & Whiston, W. (1987) *The works of Josephus: complete and unabridged*. Peabody: Hendrickson. Ant. 18.3.36-39

Therefore the Jews would have avoided it if they could. Many who did live there were thought of as having consorted with the occupiers like the publicans (tax collectors). Therefore this was a term of contempt. This was the apostle Nathanael's reaction when he heard the Jesus was from Nazareth (John 1:46). The term Nazareth has the same Hebrew root as Nazirite, which was one set apart for God (Numbers 6:1-21). According to the Jewish ritual of the Nazirite, Jesus was set apart by God from birth. Now He is living in an area despised by the general population. He now starts His ministry with these two factors looming large. He is the Son of God set apart for special service and begins His ministry as one who is already despised due to the village he came from. He is going to fulfill all righteousness (Matthew 3:15) so as to completed God's mission to bring about the cleansing of the heavenly Tabernacle and the salvation of mankind. In this instance He is accomplishing advancing God's work on the earth and identifying with the elect nation of Israel as He submits to the Galilean baptism. Finally, the baptism was an act of self-dedication as the Messiah (Christ), signifying His official start of this earthy mission.

The entire Galilean region is in the northern most section of Israel. It is about thirty miles wide and sixty miles long (north to south). So Jesus is leaving Nazareth and going east to the Jordan River to the location where John the Baptist was baptizing the Jews in repentance for their sins. Jesus was sinless and did not need to be baptized as an outward confession of His sins. He is perfect. He wanted to identify with mankind in our sinful state and show obedience to God the Father. He forgave us of our sins if we accept the fact that He was crucified, went into the ground for three days and then rose from the dead. He steps into the Jordan River and John the Baptizer, His earthly cousin, baptizes Him. This was probably an immersion as was typical and all other biblical baptism accounts where the events are described (cf. Acts 8:38-39)

THE HOLY TRINITY APPEAR TOGETHER

Mark 1:10-11

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 (KJV).

Again as Mark is anxious to move rapidly through the story of Jesus says "straightway" or immediately Jesus comes out of the water, looks heavens open and the Holy Spirit descended upon Him. The Greek word used here that gets translated as *opened* is actually *schizomenous*. It means to be torn apart or ripped open in a forceful manner. It is a metaphor (a word or phrase for one thing that is used to refer to another thing in order to show or suggest that they are similar) representing God's breaking into human time and space to deliver (Psalm 18:9, 16-19, 144:5-8; Isaiah 64:1-5).

Then came a voice out of Heaven saying to Jesus," *Thou art my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.*" The Greek verb used here is *eudokesa* and is a past tense verb with the

action continuing indicating God the Father *was* well pleased continuously. This means that God was pleased with Jesus in eternity, is pleased with Him at the point of His inauguration of His ministry and will be pleased in the future. These are descriptors of actions that have no beginning current time stamp or future. It just always is.

While we do not get perfect images of the Holy Spirit or God the Father here we do get an image. These are called anthropomorphisms. In an attempt to display an image in time and space of a metaphysical personality of the God the Bible says the Holy Spirit appears “as” a dove. It does not say He is a dove. This is using the grammatical tool of a simile. A simile is a phrase that uses the words *like* or *as* to describe someone or something by comparing it with someone or something else that is similar. This is the only way we can get an image of what is happening in this significant event. God the Father speaks from Heaven, to Jesus the Son and the Holy Spirit descends upon Jesus to complete the inauguration of the ministry. Finally, God the Father blesses the event with His assurance that this is His plan. Jesus did not become the Son or the Messiah at His baptism. He was the second person of the Godhead for all eternity before the foundation of the world. This is one of the mysteries of Heaven. We will see the other dimensions outside of our earthly physics when we are released from these bodies. That what is called the metaphysical environment. It is outside of time and space. We will understand then but for now the Godhead is presented in Scripture in a manner so we can only begin to get a foundational understanding. Several other Bible verses speak of the Trinity, as the Father, Son and Holy Spirit (Matthew 28:19; Luke 1:35; John 15:26; I Corinthians 12:4-13; II Corinthians 13:14; Ephesians 2:18; I Thessalonians 1:2-5; I Peter 1:2).

JESUS' TEMPTATION

Mark 1:12-13

¹² And immediately the Spirit driveth him into the wilderness. ¹³ And he was there in the wilderness forty days, tempted of Satan; and was with the wild beasts; and the angels ministered unto him. (KJV).

The Holy Spirit led Him into the desert (wilderness). This was the desolate area in which He would experience the temptation of Satan who wanted to prevent Jesus from going to the cross. Satan has tried unsuccessfully since he fell to stop the coming of the Messiah. Christ prevailed and we can have salvation because of what He did for us.

When Hallal (Lucifer) (Isaiah 14:13-14) fell he became Satan (adversary in Hebrew) and polluted the heavenly realm with the sin he brought in to God's presence. He then entered the Garden of Eden and enticed Eve (Chavah in Hebrew) to defy God, which brought sin into the earthly realm as well as the heavenly realm. Eventually he convinced one-third of the angels to follow him (Revelation 12:4). In this manner Satan became “the father of lies” (John 8:44) because he originated lying.

Jehovah God sent Himself, a suffering servant (Isaiah 49-57), in the body of a man to atone for the sins of the world. His suffering reached a level of pain before and during the

crucifixion that we couldn't imagine as He bore the sins of the world and the cosmic realm as well. He met with the powers of darkness in the cosmic realm, which He battled and won the war (Luke 22: 53). Satan tried all he could to prevent Christ's crucifixion. The death He experienced cleansed the heavenly tabernacle (Hebrews 9: 23-26), which Lucifer polluted with his sin and fall, as well as providing for the salvation of all who would believe the gospel of Christ (II Corinthians 5: 21). This is why the Lord Jesus had to come to earth. He had to go to the cross and provide the cleansing of the heavenlies and the earthly realms. Satan has not given up though and we see many instances in Scripture where he tried to stop the Messiah from arriving to accomplish His task. It is to these efforts on the part of Satan that we will examine and see how the Christ prevailed. We must remember that Satan is the force behind all evil in this world. Since Matthew's Gospel is more complete in this text it is appropriate to refer to it here.

First the Devil tempts Jesus. He comes at us too in varied times and places.

Matthew 4:1

Then was Jesus led up of the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted of the devil.

Now the flesh is involved as an aspect of the temptation. In this case it is hunger. Satan is trying to take Christ's focus off God and put it on His flesh.

Matthew 4:2-3

*And when he had fasted forty days and forty nights, he was afterward an hungred.
And when the tempter came to him, he said, If thou be the Son of God, command that these stones be made bread.*

Christ depends on God's Word and does not allow the flesh to lead His focus off God and God's Word.

Matthew 4:4

But he answered and said, It is written, Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God.

Again Satan tries to tempt Christ to take His focus off God and misquotes Scripture.

Matthew 4:5-7

Then the devil taketh him up into the holy city, and setteth him on a pinnacle of the temple, And saith unto him, If thou be the Son of God, cast thyself down: for it is written, He shall give his angels charge concerning thee: and in [their] hands they shall bear thee up, lest at any time thou dash thy foot

against a stone. Jesus said unto him, It is written again, Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God.

Satan now offers the world system and all its riches as enticement to take His focus off God. Christ resists and is given comfort by God's Angels.

Matthew 4:8-11

Again, the devil taketh him up into an exceeding high mountain, and sheweth him all the kingdoms of the world, and the glory of them; And saith unto him, All these things will I give thee, if thou wilt fall down and worship me. Then saith Jesus unto him, Get thee hence, Satan: for it is written, Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve. Then the devil leaveth him, and, behold, angels came and ministered unto him

The devil has been tempting since the Garden of Eden. It is important for us to see his methodologies so as to avoid them. We can resist the devil and he will flee from us (James 4:7).

In Genesis three the text tells us that the serpent was more subtle than any beast of the field. The devil is exposed as shrewd, crafty, cunning, and sly. Satan wanted to obtain through deceit the authority over the earth that he lost because of his own fall.

Satan then began his first challenge to the woman. He starts with slightly misstating what God's command had been to Adam. God said that he could eat of any tree in the Garden except the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil (Genesis 2: 16-17). Eve knew that and so did Satan. But because he wanted to impart doubt he said, "*Did God say that ye shall not eat of any tree of the Garden?*" God's command was clear but Satan was making it unclear like liberal theologians who do not like being pinned down to the specificity of words in Scripture. This is where the liberal mindset comes from. It is always dangerous to alter God's Word either by addition or deletion (Deuteronomy 4: 2; Proverbs 30: 5-6; Revelation 22: 18-19). God will always do exactly what He says He will do.

Eve, knowing the command from God either through direct communication with God or Adam, restated God's command quite clearly to the serpent. She knew the penalty for sinning against God for she added *lest ye die* (Genesis 3: 3b). One Jewish writing the Midrash Rabbah Bereshit 19:3 says that the serpent pushed Eve to touch the tree until she gave in and touched the tree. When she did, she did not die. He then said to her "Just as there is not death in touching neither is there any death in eating." This is because she added to God's command the possible prohibition of not touching the tree in addition to not eating of it.

Now Satan goes from instituting doubt in Eve's mind to outright attacking the penalty God imposed by denying it is true. This is the first lie in Scripture. Jesus called Satan the father of lies (John 8: 44). Satan then moved to a full denial of God's authority by saying

“for God does know that in the day ye eat thereof, then your eyes shall be opened and ye shall be as God knowing good and evil.” Satan was trying to instill a lure into his sin of trying to be like God or usurp God’s authority (Isaiah 14: 12-14). According to Satan, because one has the knowledge of good and evil, one is like God. Since the fall many have thought they were God. They are not of course but they fell for the lie too. Satan is essentially accusing God of being shellfish and denying Eve the opportunity to experience Godlikeness. So Satan had a three-point strategy:

1. He raises doubts of the efficacy and accuracy of God’s Word.
2. He directly denies God’s Word by contradicted it.
3. He claims that disobeying God’s Word would result in a higher good.

Genesis 3: 6 And when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was a delight to the eyes, and that the tree was to be desired to make one wise, she took of the fruit thereof, and did eat; and she gave also unto her husband with her, and he did eat.

This passage is a perfect example of individual internal temptation, for sin cannot be blamed on God or heredity (James 1: 13-15). The woman engaged in the sins expressed in I John 2: 16.

1 John 2:16 For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh and the lust of the eyes and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world (KJV).

She saw that the tree was good for food she engaged the lust of the flesh. She saw that it was delight to the eyes thereby engaging the lust of the eyes. Finally she believed that the tree would enable wisdom (power) not granted by God thus engaging in the Pride of Life. The Lord Jesus faced similar temptations with Satan in the desert after He had fasted for forty days (Matthew 4: 1-11) and He prevailed for us.

Satan’s Temptations of Eve and of Jesus

<u>Temptation</u>	<u>Genesis 3</u>	<u>Matthew 4</u>
Appeal to physical appetite Lust of eyes and flesh	You may eat of any tree (3:1).	You may eat by changing stones to bread (4:3).
Appeal to personal gain Pride of Life	You will not die (3:4).	You will not hurt Your foot (4:6).
Appeal to power or glory Pride of life	You will be like God (3:5).	You will have all the world’s kingdoms (4:8–9).

SOME OF SATAN'S ATTEMPT TO STOP GOD'S PLAN

1. The corruption of Adam's line (Genesis 6)
2. Abraham's seed (Genesis 12, 20)
3. Famine (Genesis 42)
4. Destruction of male line (Exodus 1)
5. Pharaoh's pursuit (Exodus 14)
6. The populating of Canaan (Genesis 12:6)
7. Against David's line (II Samuel 7)
8. Jehoram kills his brothers (II Chronicles 21)
9. Arabians slew all (but Ahaziah. II Chronicles 22)
10. Athaliah kills all (but Joash II Chronicles 22)
11. Blood Curse on Jeconiah
12. Haman's attempts (Esther 3)
13. Joseph's fears (Matthew 1)
14. Herod's attempts (Matthew 2)
15. The Lord's experience with Satan in the desert (from Matthew)

NEXT WEEK: MARK CHAPTER ONE CONTINUED – JESUS APPOINTS HIS APOSTLES

Please call or e-mail with any questions or comments

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