

# The Baptism of Jesus

*Mark 1:9-11*

## Two Paths to Jesus' Identity

- 1) Careful research and investigation (Luke 1:1-4)
- 2) Simply examining the Jesus of the biblical record (2 Cor. 4:4-6)

## The Baptism—It's Importance

- 1) Mentioned in all four gospels.
- 2) Criteria in Acts 1:21-22 – "Therefore it is necessary that of the men who have accompanied us all the time that the Lord Jesus went in and out among us-- 22 beginning with the baptism of John until the day that He was taken up from us-- one of these *must* become a witness with us of His resurrection."

## The Outline

- The human – 1) The Baptism of Jesus by John (9)
- The divine – 2) The Testimony to Jesus by God (10-11)

# The Baptism of Jesus by John (9)

## The Baptism by John

- "In those days Jesus came from Nazareth in Galilee and was baptized by John in the Jordan."
- "Those days"
  - When all Judea and Jerusalem was streaming out to him.
  - At the height of John's popularity and baptizing ministry.
  - Cf. Luke 3:21 - Now when all the people were baptized, Jesus was also baptized."
- When did this happen?
  - 26 AD
  - Spring – beginning of John's ministry
  - Late summer – baptism of Jesus
  - Fall – 40-day temptation



Sheep grazing near Nazareth

## “From Nazareth”

- Settled after return from Egypt
- Agricultural village
- 15 miles from Sea of Galilee
- 70 miles north of Jerusalem
- Very small
  - In size – the entire village was about 60 acres.
  - In population – it’s estimated that in Jesus’ time there were only between 200-500 people living there.
- Obscure & unknown
  - Many of the influential in Judea and Jerusalem had never even heard of it.
  - Not mentioned in the OT.
  - Jewish Talmud mentions 63 Galilean sites—but not Nazareth.
  - Josephus mentions 45 Galilean towns and villages—but not Nazareth.
- Most significant thing about Nazareth was Jesus.

## “In Galilee”

- From the Babylonian Captivity
  - 500 years before Christ
  - Fewer Jews than Gentiles
- Surrounded on all sides by Gentiles
  - Phoenicia
  - Decapolis
  - Samaria
  - Syria
- Spotted with Gentile cities
  - Tiberias
  - Hippos
- Called “Galilee of the Gentiles”
  - Matt. 4:15; from Is. 9:1



## “In Galilee”

- Judea – “instinctive rejection of a prophet from Galilee.”
  - John 1:46 - Nathanael said to him, "Can any good thing come out of Nazareth?" Philip said to him, "Come and see."
  - Cf. John 7:40-52\*



Jordan River south of Sea of Galilee

## Jesus’ Baptism

- Cf. Matt. 3:13-14 - Then Jesus arrived from Galilee at the Jordan *coming* to John, to be baptized by him. But John tried to prevent Him, saying, "I have need to be baptized by You, and do You come to me?"
- Matt. 3:15 – But Jesus answering said to him, "Permit *it* at this time; for in this way it is fitting for us to fulfill all righteousness." Then he permitted Him.
- Mark: “In those days Jesus came from Nazareth in Galilee and was baptized by John in the Jordan.”

## The Testimony to Jesus by God (10-11)

## The Testimony to Jesus By God

- 1:10 - “Immediately”
  - 11x in the first chapter alone
  - 37x in the book
- 1:10 – “coming up out of the water”
- Luke tells us that Jesus was praying.
- Three dramatic things occurred:
  - 1) The heavens opened above Him.
  - 2) The Spirit of God descended into Him.
  - 3) The Voice of God spoke to Him.

## The Testament of Levi

- More than 200 years before Christ: “The heavens will be opened, and from the temple of glory sanctification will come upon him, with a fatherly voice, as from Abraham to Isaac. And the glory of the Most High shall burst forth upon him. And the spirit of understanding and sanctification shall rest upon him.”

## The Heavens Open above Him (10)

- He saw the heavens opening
  - “He” = Jesus
    - Matt. 3:16 – John also saw.
    - Luke 3:21 - probably others who witnessed
  - “Opening”
    - Greek word → English *schism*
    - Means “to divide or tear.”
    - Mark only uses 2x
      - 1:10 for the tearing of the heavens
      - 15:38 for the tearing of the curtain
  - Cf. Is. 64:1 - Oh, that You would rend the heavens *and* come down.

## The Spirit Descended into Him (10)

- 1:10: Immediately coming up out of the water, [Jesus] saw the heavens opening, and the Spirit like a dove descending upon Him.
- “As a dove” or “like a dove”
  - 1) Like a dove in shape or form – i.e., He took on the appearance of a dove
  - 2) Like a dove in manner – i.e., hovering over Jesus
    - Cf. same image in Babylonian Talmud on Gen. 1:2.
    - Pictures the Spirit brooding or hovering over the waters like a dove.
- Luke 3:22 - the Holy Spirit descended upon Him in bodily form like a dove.
  - “The Holy Spirit descended from heaven in a visual image resembling a dove.”

## Why Did the Spirit Appear?

- 1) A testimony to Who Jesus was
  - John 1:31-34
- 2) Divine empowering
  - Mark – “the Spirit descended into Him.”
  - John 1:32-33 – remaining on Him
  - In the OT, the Spirit of God rested on men to give them the power for their assigned roles.
  - Kings, priests, and prophets.
  - The OT prophesied that the Spirit of God would rest on Messiah in a unique way.
    - Is. 11:2; 42:1; 61:1
- 3) An Initiation of His ministry
  - Acts 1:21-22 – it is necessary that of the men who have accompanied us all the time that the Lord Jesus went in and out among us-- 22 beginning with the baptism of John until the day that He was taken up from us.
  - Jesus' ministry officially began with this public act.

## The Voice of God Spoke to Him (11)

- And a voice came out of the heavens: "You are My beloved Son, in You I am well-pleased."
- Other times:
  - Gen. 21:17 - God heard the lad crying; and the angel of God called to Hagar from heaven and said to her, "What is the matter with you, Hagar? Do not fear, for God has heard the voice of the lad where he is."
  - Ex. 20:1; cf. Deut. 4:36—"Out of the heavens He let you hear His voice to discipline you; and on earth He let you see His great fire, and you heard His words from the midst of the fire."
  - Dan. 4:31 - "While the word *was* in the king's mouth, a voice came from heaven, *saying*, 'King Nebuchadnezzar, to you it is declared: sovereignty has been removed from you."

## The Voice of God Spoke to Him (11)

- Only three times during the ministry of Christ:
  - His baptism (Matt. 3:17; Mark 1:11; Luke 3:22)
  - The Transfiguration (Mark 9:7)
  - During the Passion Week (John 12:28)

## The Voice of God Spoke to Him (11)

- Mark and Luke have the voice speak to Jesus: "You are My Son."
- Matthew has the voice speak to at least John and probably to others: "This is my Son."
- Not primarily for Jesus:
  - John 12:30 - Jesus answered and said, "This voice has not come for My sake, but for your sakes."
  - Cf. 2 Pet. 1:17-18 - when [Christ] received honor and glory from God the Father, such an utterance as this was made to Him by the Majestic Glory, "This is My beloved Son with whom I am well-pleased"-- 18 and we ourselves heard this utterance made from heaven when we were with Him on the holy mountain.

## The Voice of God Spoke to Him (11)

- "And a voice came out of the heavens: "You are My beloved Son, in You I am well-pleased."
- 1) "You are My beloved Son."
  - *Beloved* – "special, unique, only"
  - Jesus is God's special, unique, only Son.
    - John 3:35; 5:20; Col. 3:13
  - From Ps. 2:7 - "I will surely tell of the decree of the LORD: He said to Me, 'You are My Son, Today I have begotten You.'
    - The Jews of the 1st century understood Ps. 2 to be referring to the Messiah.

## The Voice of God Spoke to Him (11)

- 2) "In You I am well-pleased."
  - From Is. 42:1ff.
  - Re: Suffering Servant
  - The Father is identifying Jesus as the promised Suffering Servant of Isaiah's prophecy.
  - Cf. Matt. 12:18-21

## The Doctrine of the Trinity

- 1) Three Persons are present.
- 2) They are clearly represented as distinct.
- 3) Yet the Bible teaches there is only one God.
- So the Bible teaches that there is One God, manifest in 3 distinct Persons.
- "The Trinity"

## The Purpose of Jesus' Baptism

- 1) It affirmed the message and ministry of John the Baptist.
  - Jesus' affirmed John's ministry of preparation of people for the coming of the Messiah and His kingdom.
  - Jesus associated with those who were looking for the coming of the King and His kingdom.
- 2) It confirmed Jesus' own identity.
  - As the promised Messiah (John 1:31-33)
  - As the unique Son of God (Mark 1:11)
- 3) It fulfilled a perfect, righteous life (Matt. 3:15).

## The Purpose of Jesus' Baptism

- 4) It served as a vicarious repentance.
  - About repentance
    - Mark 1:4 – preaching a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sin.
    - Mark 1:5 – And all the country of Judea was going out to him, and all the people of Jerusalem; and they were being baptized by him in the Jordan River, confessing their sins.
    - 4 Verses later: “Jesus ... was baptized by John in the Jordan.”
  - Jesus was baptized with a baptism that had to do with sin, repentance, and forgiveness.
    - But not for his sin, or his repentance, or his forgiveness.
    - So it must have been for ours!

## Isaiah 53 – The Substitute

- Christ's life provided a substitute's righteousness.
- Christ's death provided a substitute's death.
- It may be that...Christ's baptism provided a substitute's repentance.