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## Mark 1:1-8

1. “The beginning of the gospel of Jesus Christ, the Son of God.
2. As it is written in Isaiah the prophet: ‘BEHOLD, I SEND MY MESSENGER AHEAD OF YOU, WHO WILL PREPARE YOUR WAY;
3. THE VOICE OF ONE CRYING IN THE WILDERNESS, “MAKE READY THE WAY OF THE LORD, MAKE HIS PATHS STRAIGHT.”’
4. John the Baptist appeared in the wilderness preaching a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins.
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.
6. John was clothed with camel’s hair and *wore* a leather belt around his waist, and his diet was locusts and wild honey.
7. And he was preaching, and saying, ‘After me One is coming who is mightier than I, and I am not fit to stoop down and untie the thong of His sandals.
8. ‘I baptized you with water; but He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit.’”

John the Baptist here is not actually a “Baptist” in the

denomination sense of the words as it is used today. “Baptist” in this passage means “one who baptizes.” Historically, the Baptist Church is an American movement starting in the 1700’s stressing full immersion in water as the mode of Biblical baptism.

John was the son of Zacharias and Elizabeth. According to Luke chapter 1 John was related to Jesus and was born about six months before Christ. When Mary came into Elizabeth’s house and spoke, John still in Elizabeth’s womb jumped for joy.

John came as the fore-runner or herald for the Christ. His mission was to be the prophet who would prepare the way for Jesus’ public appearance. In those days a traveling king or dignitary would have men run ahead and proclaim that the king was coming so the people could prepare and be ready. So it was with John for King Jesus. Verse 6 indicates John was a very “earthy” fore-runner. He went out into the wilderness to receive God’s direction, much like Elijah--as foretold by the last Old Testament prophet Malachi four hundred years earlier.

Verse 4 says that John was preaching or proclaiming a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins. Verse 8 indicates John’s baptism was in water, while verse 5 indicates that he was baptizing in the Jordan River.

Baptism was for the forgiveness of sins. The word for is “eir” in the Greek. Marshall in his Greek parallel defines this word as “with a view toward.” These people did not receive forgiveness until Jesus shed his blood on

the cross some three to three and a half years later.

Hebrews 9:15 explains it this way: “For this reason He is the mediator of a new covenant, so that, since a death has taken place for the redemption of the transgressions that were *committed* under the first covenant, those who have been called may receive the promise of the eternal inheritance.”

In verse 5 we read the people were confessing their sins as they were being baptized by John in the Jordan River.

Next time we’ll take up the meaning of the phrase “baptism of repentance.”