



KIDS' LECTIONARY LEARNING TEACHING SUPPLEMENT

THE BAPTISM OF OUR LORD
SUNDAY, JANUARY 7TH, 2024

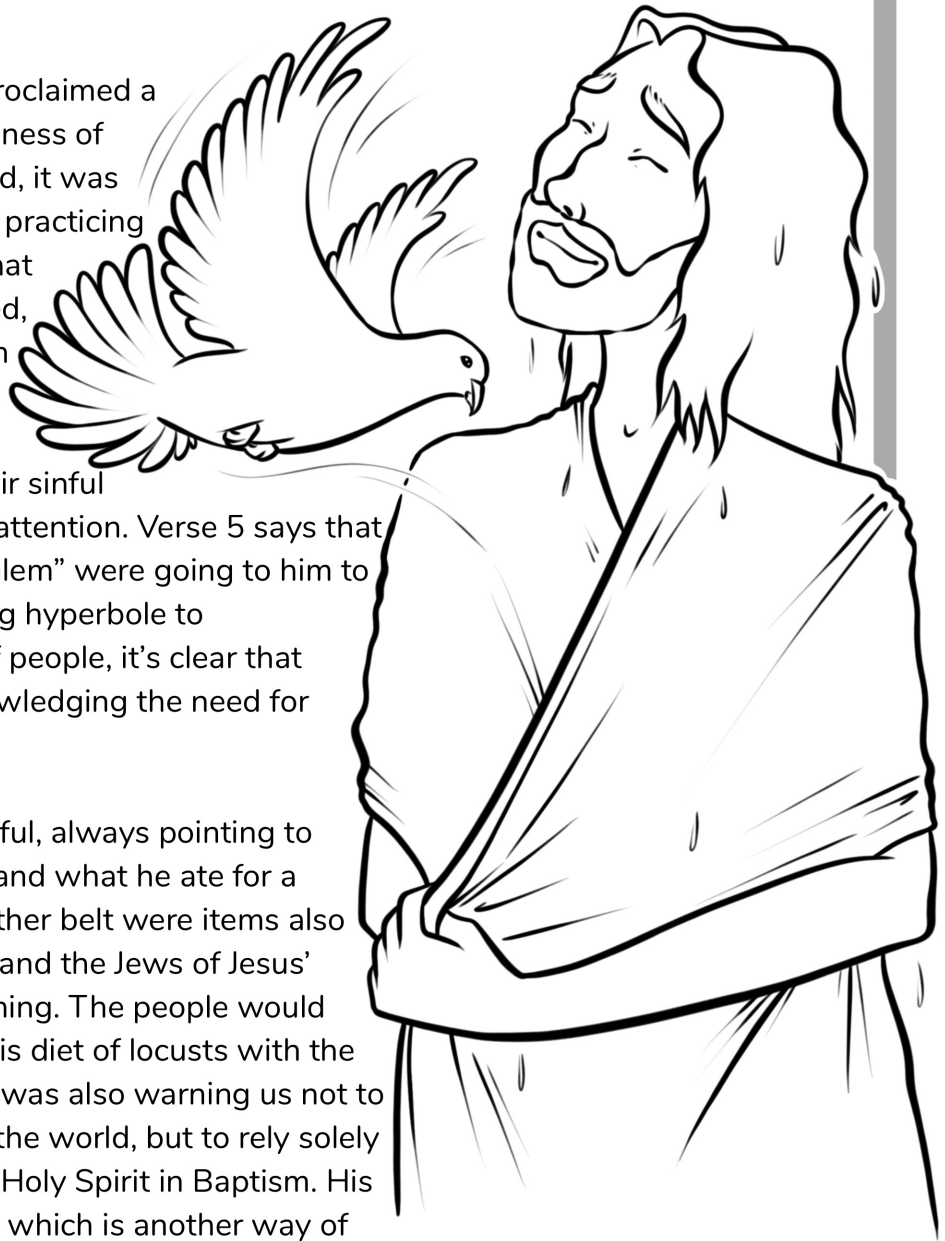
BIBLE LESSON: MARK 1:4-11

The Baptism of Jesus Mark 1: 4-11

In verse 4 Mark tells us that John proclaimed a baptism “of repentance for the forgiveness of sins”. Before John the Baptist appeared, it was likely that there were different groups practicing a form of baptism, but John insisted that Jews needed to repent and be baptized, implying that they were no better than Gentiles. John’s call to be baptized would have created controversy as he was helping people to understand their sinful nature, and he was attracting a lot of attention. Verse 5 says that “all the country of Judea and all Jerusalem” were going to him to be baptized, and while Mark was using hyperbole to demonstrate the very large number of people, it’s clear that many were hearing his call and acknowledging the need for forgiveness.

John was very humble but purposeful, always pointing to Jesus. Mark describes John’s clothing and what he ate for a few reasons. The camel’s hair and leather belt were items also worn by the prophets including Elijah and the Jews of Jesus’ day would recognize the unusual clothing. The people would associate the way John dressed and his diet of locusts with the expected return of the prophets. John was also warning us not to adopt the values and expectations of the world, but to rely solely on the promises received through the Holy Spirit in Baptism. His life was one of an “enacted prophecy” which is another way of saying that he practiced what he preached.

Verses 9-11 describe Jesus’ baptism, and how the Holy Spirit came down to earth in the form of a dove. Often this event is depicted in a peaceful way with a dove resting quietly nearby or on Jesus’ head, but in verse 10 Mark tells us that the heavens were “torn open” and the Spirit descended on Him like a dove and then the voice of God the Father joined in from heaven saying, “You are my beloved Son....” If we focus in on what Mark described, it’s hard to accept a peaceful or serene setting. What a spectacle it must have been to have the heavens torn open and the ...





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LUTHERAN LAYMEN'S LEAGUE
OF CANADA

voice of the Lord booming from the heavens, and what a joyful blessing this would have been for Jesus to both see the Holy Spirit and hear from His Father!



Prayer

Let us pray together: Dear Father in Heaven, thank you for sending your humble servant John and your own Son Jesus to be baptized so that we could share in that Baptism, and then be saved through Jesus' death and resurrection. In Jesus' name we thank and praise you. Amen.

Notes: