

Mark 1:5

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And there went out unto him all the land of Judaea, and they of Jerusalem, and were all baptized of him in the river of Jordan, confessing their sins.

Analysis

This verse describes the massive response to John's ministry: 'all the land of Judaea, and they of Jerusalem' (πᾶσα ἡ Ἰουδαία χώρα καὶ οἱ Ἱεροσολυμίται πάντες) came to him. The hyperbole emphasizes widespread impact—John's prophetic message drew people from across Judea. They 'were all baptized of him in the river of Jordan, confessing their sins' (ἐβαπτίζοντο ὑπ' αὐτοῦ ἐν τῷ Ἰορδάνῃ ποταμῷ ἐξομολογούμενοι τὰς ἁμαρτίας αὐτῶν). The imperfect tense indicates continuous action—a steady stream of penitents. 'Confessing their sins' (exomologoumenoi) means openly acknowledging specific sins, not generic admission of human fallibility. This public confession demonstrated genuine repentance. The Jordan River location was significant—where Israel crossed into the Promised Land under Joshua, now the site of spiritual renewal.

Historical Context

First-century Judaism had no equivalent to John's mass baptism movement. While ritual washings existed, no prophet had previously called Jews en masse to repentance and baptism as preparation for God's kingdom. This created tremendous excitement and speculation about John's identity—was he Elijah? The Messiah? (John 1:19-27). The religious establishment in Jerusalem sent investigators to question John. The fact that people came from Jerusalem (the religious center) to the wilderness (periphery) to confess sins before a wilderness

prophet represented a remarkable reversal and indictment of the temple establishment.

Related Passages

1 John 4:8 — God is love

1 Corinthians 13:4 — Characteristics of love

Study Questions

1. What does the massive response to John's call for repentance reveal about spiritual hunger and readiness for God's work?
2. How does public confession of sins demonstrate the authenticity and costliness of genuine repentance?

Interlinear Text

καὶ	ἐξεπορεύετο	πρὸς	αὐτῶν	πάντες	ἡ	Ἰουδαία	χώρα
And	there went out	unto	him	all	G3588	G2449	the land
G2532	G1607	G4314	G846	G3956			G5561

καὶ	οἱ	Ἱεροσολυμίται	καὶ	ἐβαπτίζοντο	πάντες	ἐν	τῷ
And	G3588	they of Jerusalem	And	baptized	all	in	G3588
G2532		G2415	G2532	G907	G3956	G1722	

Ἰορδάνη	ποταμῷ	ὑπ'	αὐτῶν	ἐξομολογούμενοι	τὰς
of Jordan	the river	of	him	confessing	G3588
G2446	G4215	G5259	G846	G1843	

ἁμαρτίας	αὐτῶν
sins	him
G266	G846

Additional Cross-References

Acts 19:18 (Parallel theme): And many that believed came, and confessed, and shewed their deeds.

Acts 2:38 (Sin): Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost.

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