

**Ensure fellowship with God through 1 John 1:9**

**1 John 1:9** If we confess our sins, He is faithful and righteous to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

**Matthew 3:1**

In our Sunday classes, we noted from v. 1 that John began **“preaching in the wilderness of Judea.”**

**“Preaching”** – κηρῦσσω - KERUSSO

- *“To speak with authority and conviction as a herald”*
- In this case, John was doing the speaking with the authority and conviction required.

*His message is found in verse 2 - -*

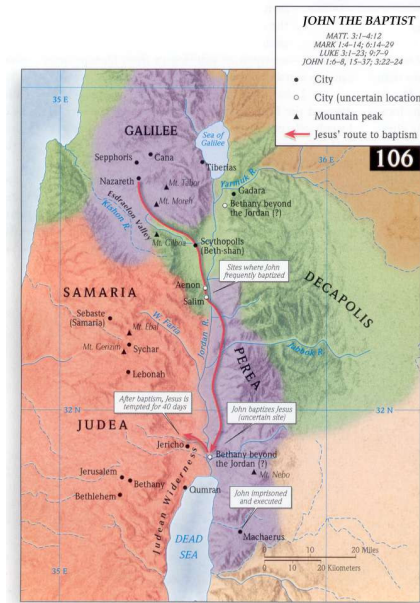
**2 “Repent...** the present active imperative of METANOEO which means to *“change your mind.”*

**... because ... GAR** – stating the reason *why* they had to repent

**... the kingdom of heaven is at hand.**

**“Is at hand”** – the present active indicative ἐγγίζω - EGGIZO

- *“On the brink of being instituted”*
  - The King came from heaven when He stepped across the threshold from **eternity** into **time**.
  - The kingdom that He will rule will be ruled with heavenly principles.
  - The kingdom that Messiah would rule was *on the brink of being instituted* because Messiah had come – He was present.
  - It was John’s job to prepare the nation to receive her King.
- John is commanding the people to **repent** or *change their minds* because –
- National repentance secures national restoration. Note the following passages -  
**Nehemiah 1:8-9**  
**Zechariah 1:3**  
**Malachi 3:7**
  - National [Divine] discipline is designed by God to secure repentance (**2 Chronicles 7:13-14**).
  - John is commanding them to do exactly what the Hebrew Scriptures prescribe in order to be restored.
- They were under National Divine Discipline even though they had been returned to the Land.
- They were an occupied land divided into districts governed by tetrarchs under the controlling influence and protection of Rome (**Luke 3:1**).
- Pontius Pilate – governor of Judea
  - Antipas (aka Herod) - tetrarch of Galilee
  - Philip (Antipas’ brother) – tetrarch of Ituraea and Trachonitis
  - Lysanias - tetrarch of Abilene



**MAP OF THE AREA**

John is communicating, preaching, God's message to Israel with authority and conviction.

That is the key ingredient to national restoration.

**POD** - The preaching of God's word is the key ingredient to the national restoration of any country (Matthew 3:2 cf. Isaiah 40:3-5; Nehemiah 1:8-9).

When there is freedom in any country to teach the Word, and that Word is responded to with positive volition, that country is going to receive blessing from God.

**DECHOMAI** – receive the word with open arms!

There is quite a bit of positive volition noted in verse 5 . . .

**5** Then Jerusalem was **going out** to him and all Judea and all the district around the Jordan;

**“Going out”** - ἐκπορεύομαι - EKPOREUOMAI

Imperfect tense indicating people are “pouring out”.

- Tells us that people were pouring out of not only Jerusalem but also the surrounding districts.
  - Judea
  - Galilee
  - Decapolis
- There is some positive volition.

**POD** - Positive volition results in the desire to be located wherever God has placed the messenger.

**6** and they were being baptized by him in the Jordan River, as they confessed their sins.

- Confession of sin is inherent in repentance.
- You are not going to confess your sins unless you change your mind about what you've done.

- Repentance [*change of mind*] is the prerequisite for national restoration.

### Luke 3:3

3 And he came into all the district around the Jordan,

- Judean wilderness in the fords of the Jordan
  - From Bethabara (East of Jericho)
  - To Aenon (near Salim)

... preaching a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins;

### “Preaching a baptism of repentance” -

κηρύσσω βάπτισμα μετανοίας

- Present active participle - κηρύσσω - KERUSSO

- He was “*speaking with authority and conviction*” of the necessity of a

βάπτισμα - BAPTISMA

- “*Baptism*”
  - This baptism was conducted in the Jordan, so it was a water baptism.
- Verbal form of βάπτισμα is βαπτίζω – BAPTIZO - “*To immerse or dip*”
    - John would immerse those who believed in the message he was preaching.
    - We have to remember from **Matthew 3:6** that they were being baptized as they confessed their sins.

This was a **baptism of repentance**, accompanied by confession.

- Descriptive genitive **μετάνοια - METANOIA**
  - It’s a baptism “*characterized by a change of mind.*”
  - The change of mind is that the people realize they are condemned to judgment and need forgiveness. This results in confession of sins and baptism.

### Malachi 3:1-7

(1) "Behold, I am going to send My messenger (John), and he will clear the way before Me. And the Lord, whom you seek, will suddenly come to His temple; and the messenger of the covenant, in whom you delight, behold, He is coming," says the LORD of hosts.

(2) "But who can endure the day of His coming? And who can stand when He appears? For He is like a refiner's fire and like fullers' soap.

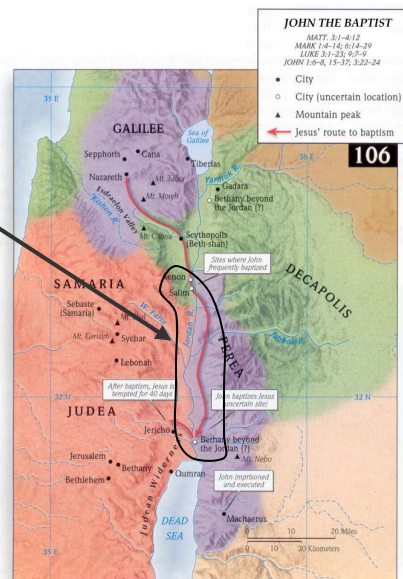
(3) "He will sit as a smelter and purifier of silver, and He will purify the sons of Levi and refine them like gold and silver, so that they may present to the LORD offerings in righteousness.

(4) "Then the offering of Judah and Jerusalem will be pleasing to the LORD as in the days of old and as in former years.

(5) "Then I will draw near to you for judgment; and I will be a swift witness against the sorcerers and against the adulterers and against those who swear falsely, and against those who oppress the wage earner in his wages, the widow and the orphan, and those who turn aside the alien and do not fear Me," says the LORD of hosts.

(6) "For I, the LORD, do not change; therefore you, O sons of Jacob, are not consumed.

(7) "From the days of your fathers you have turned aside from My statutes and have not kept them. Return to Me, and I will return to you," says the LORD of hosts. **"But you say, 'How shall we return?'**



## Luke 3:3 (continued)

. . . A baptism of repentance **for the forgiveness of sins**;

### “For the forgiveness of sins” - εἰς ἄφεσιν ἁμαρτιῶν

Preposition εἰς plus the accusative ἄφεσις

- εἰς plus ἄφεσις – EIS plus APHESIS
  - “Pardon, release or cancellation”
  - This is a *pardon* from the guilt or penalty of sin.
- Preposition εἰς plus the accusative case indicates the *goal*, direction or purpose of the baptism.
- The *goal* was the pardon from the penalty of sin.
- What’s the penalty of sin? **Judgment by fire.**

Remember this – the penalty of sin is judgment by fire, **unless** you have received a pardon from that penalty.

### What did many Jews believe would pardon them from judgment?

The heritage of being born in the line of Abraham

Obeying the Mosaic Law

As a believer in the Lord, have you received pardon from that penalty? YES!

What is baptism?

- It’s a ritual where a person is identified with something or someone.

The people who were being baptized were being identified with the promised Messiah and His kingdom.

- The Messiah had the power to forgive sin; therefore, identification with Messiah through John’s baptism resulted in the individual being identified with the One who would forgive and pardon the individual from the penalty of sin when He came.
- Those not identified with Him do not have a pardon; therefore, they will burn.

What is the penalty of sin?

- Judgment by fire
- The Hebrew Scriptures identified Messiah’s coming with judgment.
- The Jews understood exactly what was happening here.

### Review John’s Baptism:

1. The ritual was immersion in the Jordan River.
2. It was characterized as a “Baptism of Repentance” because it was accompanied by the confession of sins.
3. It was a testimony of the personal need for Messiah to forgive sins.
4. The baptism symbolized two things:
  - a. The individual’s *allegiance* to Messiah who had the power to forgive sin.
    - If you have been identified with Messiah who had the power to forgive sins, then you would receive pardon from the penalty of sins when He came.
  - b. The individual’s *identification* with the kingdom that Messiah would rule.
    - Therefore, when Messiah instituted the kingdom, the one who had been identified with the kingdom through John’s baptism would be enter the kingdom.

Thousands upon thousands were being baptized by John.

- The political and spiritual climate at that time was at an all time low.

- There were people around who knew and worshipped the Lord and looked for the deliverance of Israel
  - \*Joseph and Mary
  - \*Simeon
  - \*Zacharias and Elizabeth

Luke provides us a wonderful glimpse into what was happening.

**Luke 3:3-18**

3 And he came into all the district around the Jordan, preaching a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins (*pardoned* from the penalty of sin); 4 as it is written in the book of the words of Isaiah the prophet. (quote from **Isaiah 40:3-5**) . . .

“THE VOICE OF ONE CRYING IN THE WILDERNESS,

- What is he crying out –

‘MAKE READY THE WAY OF THE LORD, MAKE HIS PATHS STRAIGHT.

5 ‘EVERY RAVINE WILL BE FILLED, AND EVERY MOUNTAIN AND HILL WILL BE BROUGHT LOW; THE CROOKED WILL BECOME STRAIGHT, AND THE ROUGH ROADS SMOOTH;

- A road is being built for Messiah, by the communication of the Word to the people, replete with commands.

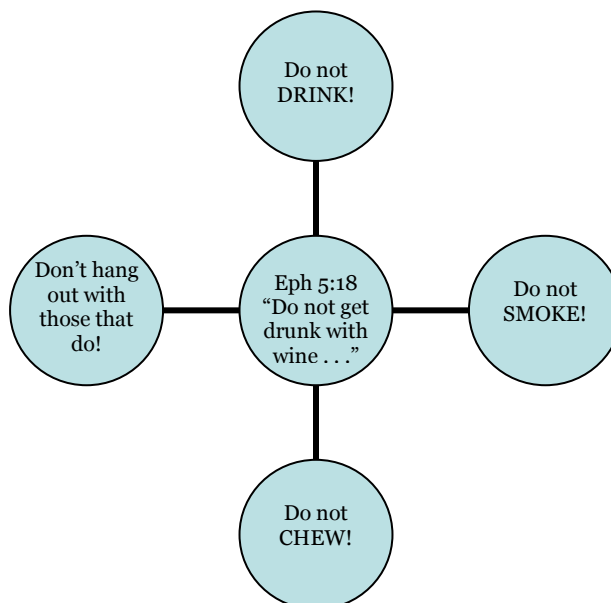
6 AND ALL FLESH WILL SEE THE SALVATION (DELIVERANCE) OF GOD.’ ”

- John is building this highway through preaching in the wilderness.
- The reference here is to Messiah.
- When He comes, John will proclaim, “Behold the Lamb of God . . . ”

7 So he *began* saying to the crowds who were going out to be baptized by him, “You brood of vipers, who warned you to flee from the wrath to come?

- Wrath and judgment was associated with the coming of Messiah.
- This was John’s scathing rebuke to the Pharisees and Sadducees who had come with ulterior motives.

*The Christ of the Gospels*, J W Shepard on the Pharisees and Sadducees.



**Note how a simple command of Scripture is stretched into a legalistic set of commands!**

This shows an emphasis on “my good works” rather than the supernatural power of the Holy Spirit.

<sup>8</sup> “Therefore bear fruits in keeping with repentance, and do not begin to say to yourselves, ‘We have Abraham for our father,’

They thought they would be saved from hell because they were physical descendents of Abraham.

. . . for I say to you that from these stones God is able to raise up children to Abraham.

<sup>9</sup> “Indeed the axe is already laid at the root of the trees;

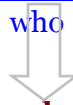
This is the pending judgment of being cut down - Messiah is here!

. . . so every tree that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire (*Judgment*).”

⇒ Of what is fruit bearing a result in the life of a tree?

- An intrinsic life
- There is life within the tree - -
  - If it is alive, it will bear fruit.
  - If it is dead, it will not bear fruit.
- Pharisees placed an emphasis on external works – things that people could see.

<sup>10</sup> And the crowds were questioning him, saying, “**Then what shall we do?**” <sup>11</sup> And he would answer and say to them, “The man who has two tunics is to share with him who has none; and he who has food is to do likewise.”



**This is the attitude of someone who is positive!**

Remember the Philippian Jailor? “**What must I do to be saved . . .?**”

<sup>12</sup> And *some tax collectors* also came to be baptized, and they said to him, “**Teacher, what shall we do?**”

<sup>13</sup> And he said to them, “Collect no more than what you have been ordered to.”

<sup>14</sup> *Some soldiers (Gentiles)* were questioning him, saying, “**And what about us, what shall we do?**” And he said to them, “Do not take money from anyone by force, or accuse *anyone* falsely, and be content with your wages.” (Do not oppress others.)

This gives us an insight into what people were confessing in association with their baptism -

- ♦ I have not loved my neighbor as myself and, when I saw a man without food and a tunic, I failed to provide for him from my abundance.
- ♦ I have collected more than ordered to.
- ♦ I have extorted money from people.

They had a change of mind!

Did the Sadducees and Pharisees ask “**What shall we do?**”

- NO
- They had **negative volition** and were not interested. They didn’t care about what needed to be done!
  - They did not care about confession of sin.
  - They did not care about their spiritual growth.

\*They didn’t wake each morning and say, “Lord, what would you have me do today?”

\*They don’t say, “Lord, my life is Yours. Do with me as you wish.”

<sup>15</sup> Now while the people were in a state of expectation and all were **wondering in their hearts** (in their souls) about John, as to whether he was the Christ,

<sup>16</sup> John answered and said to them all, “As for me, I baptize you with water; but One is coming who is mightier than I, and I am not fit to untie the thong of His sandals;

He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire.

- The penalty of sin is judgment by fire . . . *unless* you have received a pardon from that penalty.

Two categories of people when Messiah comes:

- CAT 1 - Those who have been identified [ritually] with Messiah & His Kingdom through John’s baptism.  
They have a pardon from the penalty - *judgment by fire*.
- CAT 2 - Those who have not!  
They have NO pardon and are therefore baptized by Messiah *by fire*.

### **What separates the people in these two categories? Faith and faith alone!**

Salvation is always the same, regardless of the dispensation in which an individual finds himself -  
faith alone in Jesus Christ alone, as He is revealed.

When Messiah comes, those who had received pardon from the penalty of sin would be baptized by Messiah  
with the **Holy Spirit**.

Those who did not receive pardon would be baptized by Messiah with **fire**.

. . . He will baptize you with the **Holy Spirit and fire**.

These are two different baptisms yet associated together.

-- Joel 2:28-29; Malachi 3:2-5 --

<sup>17</sup> “His winnowing fork is in His hand to thoroughly clear His threshing floor and to gather the wheat into His barn; but He will burn up the chaff with unquenchable fire.” (A separation and a judgment)

<sup>18</sup> So with many other exhortations he preached the gospel to the people.

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All Scriptures quoted are from New American Standard unless otherwise noted.