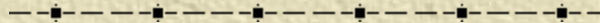




*Preparing the Way for the  
Messiah King*

Matthew 3:1-12



# *Messiah Brings the Kingdom of Heaven*

## **Matthew 3:1-6**

*<sup>1</sup> In those days John the Baptist came preaching in the wilderness of Judea, <sup>2</sup> "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand." <sup>3</sup> For this is he who was spoken of by the prophet Isaiah when he said, "The voice of one crying in the wilderness: 'Prepare the way of the Lord; make his paths straight.'" <sup>4</sup> Now John wore a garment of camel's hair and a leather belt around his waist, and his food was locusts and wild honey. <sup>5</sup> Then Jerusalem and all Judea and all the region about the Jordan were going out to him, <sup>6</sup> and they were baptized by him in the river Jordan, confessing their sins.*

# *Kingdom of Heaven*

## ✦ Wilderness

✦ “Repent, for the Kingdom of Heaven is near”

- When the king is coming, set things right

## ✦ Repenting

- Not just feeling bad
- Not just saying I am sorry
- It is a change of heart, turning to or back to God

## ✦ Why John the Baptist?

- 400 Years of Silence
- New/Old Prophet

# *Kingdom of Heaven*

## ✦ Why John the Baptist?

– Old Prophet preparing the way

- *Isaiah 40:3* <sup>3</sup> A voice cries: "In the wilderness prepare the way of the LORD; make straight in the desert a highway for our God."
- *Transition from judgment to restoration*

– Return of Elijah

- Malachi 3:1 and Malachi 4:5-6

## ✦ John the Baptist is Elijah?

- *ESV 2 Kings 1:8* They answered him, "He wore a garment of hair, with a belt of leather about his waist." And he said, "It is Elijah the Tishbite."

# *Kingdom of Heaven*

## ✦ Baptism

- Immerse, dip or plunge
- The need for forgiveness
- Cleansing from sin
  - Passing from judgment and death
- Baptism was reserved for Gentiles converts
  - Everyone is in need of forgiveness and cleansing
  - Confession of sins
  - Repent, turn to or back toward God

## ✦ Baptism in the Wilderness

- Exile and Exodus

# *The Messiah Brings Conflict*

## **Matthew 3:7-10**

*<sup>7</sup> But when he saw many of the Pharisees and Sadducees coming to his baptism, he said to them, "You brood of vipers! Who warned you to flee from the wrath to come? <sup>8</sup> Bear fruit in keeping with repentance. <sup>9</sup> And do not presume to say to yourselves, 'We have Abraham as our father,' for I tell you, God is able from these stones to raise up children for Abraham. <sup>10</sup> Even now the axe is laid to the root of the trees. Every tree therefore that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire.*

# *The Messiah Brings Conflict*

## ✦ Pharisees and Sadducees

- Pharisees – popular with common people, laws from tradition that tried to apply the law to every day life
- Sadducees – Aristocratic, high priestly, cooperative with Rome

## ✦ Did not come to be baptized

## ✦ Offspring of Vipers

- True heart change shows

# *The Messiah Brings Conflict*

- ✦ Family History ultimately means nothing
  - Wrath coming not just for Gentiles
  - All have sinned and fallen short of God's glory
- ✦ The axe is coming
  - Dead trees – spiritual dead
  - Small tree with little fruit – those who do not show a changed repentant heart
  - The Religious elite are spiritually dead
- ✦ God can, will and does raise up true ancestors

# *The Messiah Brings Judgment*

## **Matthew 3:11-12**

*<sup>11</sup> "I baptize you with water for repentance, but he who is coming after me is mightier than I, whose sandals I am not worthy to carry. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire. <sup>12</sup> His winnowing fork is in his hand, and he will clear his threshing floor and gather his wheat into the barn, but the chaff he will burn with unquenchable fire."*

# *The Messiah Brings Judgment*

✦ John is only pointing to Jesus

- He is just a servant, not even worthy to carry or untie Jesus' shoes

✦ Jesus will inaugurate the messianic rule

✦ Baptize with Holy Spirit and Fire

✦ Baptized with the Holy Spirit

- Cleansing and empowering of the Holy Spirit
- At conversion we are indwelt with the Holy Spirit
- We are sealed by the Spirit

# *The Messiah Brings Judgment*

## ✦ Baptized with Fire

### – Two Ideas

- Believers will face trials to strengthen them
  - They will survive the fires
- Unbelievers will face the fires of Judgment – Hell
  - They will not survive the fire

### – Grain and Chaff

- Grain is repentant believers
- Chaff is unrepentant that are consumed by unquenchable fire

✦ The Messiah is coming to inaugurate His kingdom and with it comes conflict and judgment.