

Questions for Gospel Harmony #13

Matthew 3.1-12; Mark 1.1-8; Luke 3.1-18

1. How does Mark begin his gospel? (Mark 1.1-4) What is the significance of the historical information given by Luke? (Luke 3.1-2)
2. What did John preach? What prophecy did John fulfill in his preaching? What was John's baptism for? (Matthew 3.1-3; Mark 1.2-4; Luke 3.3-6)
3. How does the Bible describe John's appearance and lifestyle, and what is the significance of that? Where was John baptizing, and who came to be baptized by Him? (Matthew 3.4-7; Mark 1.5-6; Luke 3.7)
4. What did John say to the Pharisees? Explain the phrases: "fruits worthy of repentance", "God is able to raise up children to Abraham from these stones", and "even now the ax is laid to the root of the trees". (Matthew 3.7-10; Luke 3.7-9)
5. What did John say to the people, tax collectors, and soldiers? Explain each of his admonitions. What does it mean, "the people were in expectation"? (Luke 3.10-15)
6. How does John describe, "the One coming" after him? With what would He baptize? How does He use His winnowing fan? (Matthew 3.11-12; Mark 1.7-8; Luke 3.16-18)

Special Question: Based on the ways in which the word fire is used in Matthew 3.10-12 and Luke 3.9-17, should we conclude that baptism with fire is a positive thing, or a negative thing?

Matthew 3.1-12; Mark 1.1-8; Luke 3.1-18

The beginning of the gospel of Jesus Christ, the Son of God: Now in the fifteenth year of the reign of Tiberius Caesar, Pontius Pilate being governor of Judea, Herod being tetrarch of Galilee, his brother Philip tetrarch of Iturea and the region of Trachonitis, and Lysanias tetrarch of Abilene, while Annas and Caiaphas were high priests, the word of God came to John the son of Zacharias in the wilderness. In those days John the Baptist came preaching in the wilderness of Judea, and saying, "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand!" For this is he who was spoken of by the prophet Isaiah - And he went into all the region around the Jordan, preaching a baptism of repentance for the remission of sins, as it is written in the book of the words of [the Prophets] Isaiah the prophet, saying: Behold, I send My messenger before Your face, who will prepare Your way before You. The voice of one crying in the wilderness: 'Prepare the way of the LORD; Make His paths straight. Every valley shall be filled and every mountain and hill brought low; The crooked places shall be made straight and the rough ways smooth; And all flesh shall see the salvation of God.' " Now John himself was clothed in camel's hair, with a leather belt around his waist; and his food was locust and wild honey. Then Jerusalem, all Judea, and all the region around the Jordan went out to him and were baptized by him in the Jordan, confessing their sins. But when he saw many of the Pharisees and Sadducees coming to his baptism, he said to them [to the multitudes that came out to be baptized by him], "Brood of vipers! Who warned you to flee from the wrath to come? Therefore bear fruits worthy of repentance, and do not think [do not begin] to say to yourselves, 'We have Abraham as our father.' For I say to you that God is able to raise up children to Abraham from these stones. And even now the ax is laid to the root of the trees. Therefore every tree which does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire. So the people asked him, saying, "What shall we do then?" He answered and said to them, "He who has two tunics, let him give to him who has none; and he who has food, let him do likewise." Then tax collectors also came to be baptized, and said to him, "Teacher, what shall we do?" And he said to them, "Collect no more than what is appointed for you." Likewise the soldiers asked him, saying, "And what shall we do?" So he said to them, "Do not intimidate anyone or accuse falsely, and be content with your wages." Now as the people were in expectation, and all reasoned in their hearts about John, whether he was the Christ or not, John answered, saying to all [he preached] I indeed baptize [baptized] you with water unto repentance but He who is coming after me is mightier than I, whose sandals I am not worthy to carry [whose sandal strap I am not worthy to stoop down and loose]. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire. His winnowing fan is in His hand, and He will thoroughly clean out His threshing floor, and gather His wheat into the barn [His barn]; but He will burn up the chaff with unquenchable fire." And with many other exhortations he preached to the people.