

THE LIFE AND TIMES OF JESUS THE MESSIAH
WEEK 8 – JOHN’S BAPTISM/JESUS’ BAPTISM – DECLARED TO BE THE SON
OF GOD

Matthew 3:1 – “*In those days John the Baptizer came preaching in the wilderness of Judea. . . .*” The WILDERNESS. . . .

God often chooses obscure, out-of-the-way, off-the-beaten track places of PREPARATION for His servants – for believers.

Jesus grew up in a place of ridicule – Nazareth.

Moses labored 40 years (Acts 7:30) on the back of the desert.

David tended sheep (I Sam. 17:15) before he became King.

Paul was sent to Arabia and later to Damascus (Gal. 1:17-18) to study and prepare for three years.

Last week we discussed how Jesus FULFILLED – at His birth - several very complex prophecies – proving to the Jewish world that He is the Messiah – that He is the King that was promised. In presenting Jesus as King, Matthew has one other approach here in the beginning of his Gospel to show us that Jesus is King. God sent a King’s herald to announce the arrival of King Jesus! We read of John bursting on the scene!

How does a herald prove that Jesus is King? If we know about the herald beforehand – then when he appears – we know the King is coming!

Matthew 3:1-3 - “*In those days John the Baptist came preaching in the wilderness of Judea,* ² *and saying, ‘Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand!’* ³ *For this is he who was spoken of by the prophet Isaiah, saying: ‘The voice of one crying in the wilderness: Prepare the way of the LORD; make His paths straight.’”*

In other words, Matthew is saying – “Jewish people – you know about this man, John! The prophet Isaiah spoke of him in Isaiah 40:3.”

So – Jewish people – you know the King is coming!

Matthew 3:1 - “*In those days. . .*” There’s a gap between Matthew 2 and Matthew 3 of three decades! God is on time!

Luke 3:1-2a – “*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,* ² *while Annas and Caiaphas were high priests,. . .*”

NOTICE – Luke lists the political leaders of the region. Luke gives us a real, historical framework. Plus Luke tells us of what was happening in that day just by mentioning these historical figures: Tiberius was an emperor known for his cruelty and severity. Pilate was known for his brutal massacres of the Jewish people in Judea and his overall insensitivity toward the Jewish people. Herod the Great’s family was known for their corruption and cruelty and paranoia.

Caiaphas and Annas – Caiaphas was the High Priest; Annas was his father-in-law. As the patriarch of the family, Annas had influence and power among the priests. They were corrupt. They were more interested in power and politics. BUT this was GOD’S time. . .

Luke 3:2b – “. . . *the word of God came to John the son of Zacharias in the wilderness.*”

John had been living in the wilderness –in the desolate wilderness – away from the “system” of the day! Away from the manmade system of Rabbinical Judaism – what the Rabbis were teaching apart from the Tanakh/the Hebrew Scriptures/the OT. John was calling them away from the manmade system, and calling them out to a desolate spot where they could begin to focus on the desolation of their hearts.

John 1:28 – “*These things were done in Bethabara^[h] beyond the Jordan, where John was baptizing.*”

John was immersing Jewish people at the southern end of the Jordan River Valley – the north part of the Dead Sea.

God called John at this time! The emergence of John was like the sudden sounding of the voice of God. Remember – for 430 years there had been no revelation from God – no prophets warning the people – no angelic visitations. In John, the prophetic voice spoke again!

John proclaimed a new government – the kingdom of heaven – a physical, literal kingdom! (“the kingdom” depicted by the stone that we read about in Daniel 2:35, 45 that crushes all the previously established kingdoms). Yet John did not proclaim this kingdom in Jerusalem, the nation’s governmental center. Instead he preached first to a handful of country folk living along the Jordan River, twenty miles to the east of the capital city.

John’s clothing and food are described. He wore a homespun camel’s hair shirt, a wide leather belt, and ate locusts and honey. This description had special meaning for the people looking for the Messiah. The prophets told the people that the Messiah’s arrival would be preceded by the appearance of Elijah. Elijah ministered in a time of crisis in Israel, when the nation was far from God, and a time that immediately preceded a terrible judgment. Elijah had been described as “A hairy man wearing a leather belt around his waist” (II Kings 1:2-8). John the Baptizer emerged from the same desert where Elijah spent most of his life. He preached with the same boldness as Elijah. He dressed like Elijah. As the angel Gabriel told Zacharias, John’s father, John would come in the spirit and power of Elijah (Luke 1:17).

John’s dress was simple and practical and perfectly suited to life in the Judean wilderness where temperatures can climb to 130 degrees. His diet – locusts (which were kosher [Lev. 11:22]) and honey. Israel was described as a land “flowing with milk and honey” (Ex. 3:8).

What was John's message? REPENT! Why? Firstly, John's message must have a connection with an OT message because he was prophesied in Isaiah 40 and in Malachi 3. Secondly, John's message was to repent because they needed to repent. What was God's message to Israel throughout the OT? RETURN TO ME, ISRAEL (Isa. 55:7)

Matthew 3:1 - *"In those days came John. . . "*

. . . the verb *came* in Greek speaks of the arrival of an official who has a specific function. John was an official herald announcing the arrival of a King.

Matthew 3:2 - *"saying, 'Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand!'"*

The Kingdom of Heaven is at hand – it's imminent – it's the next thing to occur. Why is the Kingdom of Heaven at hand? The King has arrived!

Luke 3:3-6 - *"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 Isaiah the prophet, saying: '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.'"*

John was a voice - he was a herald – heralding the King. Herald – one who goes before. A forerunner. John was a way-preparer – for the King. He was calling the people to work on the path to get it ready for the King to arrive. However, John was heralding the King of Kings.

Did the Jewish people know about John?

Isaiah 40:3 speaks of John – *"The voice of one crying in the wilderness. Prepare the way of the Lord."*

Malachi 3:1 as well - *"Behold, I send My messenger, and he will prepare the way before Me."*

This is John!!

Who's the "Me"? It's the Messiah! It's Jesus!

John is the herald – announcing the arrival of the King. This is another way of proving that Jesus is the King!

Whose way is John preparing? John is preparing "*the way*" before Jesus. John's message was to prepare the people for the Lord – for His ways – the Messiah's ways - to take hold in their hearts! What was involved in preparing the people for the coming of the Messiah, the King? They needed to repent! Their hearts needed to change. They needed to change direction. That was God's message throughout the entire OT! Isaiah 55:7 – turn Israel! Turn from your sinful ways; submit to God; trust in Him alone for your salvation! John was calling a sinful nation back to God.

The word *repent*, metanio, means more than just sorrow. It means to turn around. It means a change of opinion. A change of purpose. A change of direction. A change of mind. A change of will. A change from sin to holiness – because one has been declared righteous by God – in justification one has been clothed in God’s righteousness.

What we read in Isaiah 40 is the prophecy of a new day dawning for Israel. What we read in Matthew 3 - THE KING IS HERE!

In the history and culture of the day, it was the custom of some Eastern monarchs to send heralds before them to announce that they were on their way. They would send an envoy to ensure that the roads were safe. Obstacles had to be cleared away, causeways had to be built, and crooked roads straightened, and the land leveled. But John – in his message - was NOT preparing a physical road, but an entrance, so to speak, into men’s hearts – for the King to enter.

Valleys – which were low – would be exalted

Mountains and hills – which were high - would be made low

The crooked – would be made straight

Matthew 23:12 – Jesus said - *“And whoever exalts himself will be humbled, and he who humbles himself will be exalted.”*

John was calling people to humble themselves and prepare for the arrival of the King. John’s great message is that things *can* be set right. The Messiah is here to do things that are too big for man: filling valleys, leveling mountains, setting crooked roads straight and rough roads smooth.

The Jews at that time thought that the problem was mainly with the Romans who politically oppressed them. John made them see that the problem was their heart attitude toward God – they needed to get right with God.

As we’re reading from Isaiah 40, I would like for us to consider the book of Isaiah. From the outset of Isaiah – from chapter 1 through to chapter 39 – we have the creation of man, the sinfulness of man, the judgment of man. In the book of Isaiah, 39 chapters address creation, rebellion, sin, and judgment. How many books are there in the OT? 39!!! Then we come to Isaiah 40:1-2 - *“‘Comfort, yes, comfort My people!’ Says your God. ² ‘Speak comfort to Jerusalem, and cry out to her, that her warfare is ended, that her iniquity is pardoned; for she has received from the LORD’s hand double for all her sins.’”* This is a shocking transition from the first 39 chapters in Isaiah! We see burden after burden; judgment after judgment; God’s wrath is so clearly seen in the first 39 chapters in Isaiah! Isaiah 40 launches the rest of the book of Isaiah – all the way to chapter 66 – into the message of salvation and restoration through the Kingdom of God and the great King – and speaks of His joy and peace! So we go from sin and judgment in 39 chapters of Isaiah to salvation and restoration for Israel in the last 27 chapters of Isaiah. How many books are there in the OT? 39 The first 39 chapters in Isaiah speak of judgment. We get to Isaiah 40 and we see hope, restoration, salvation, the Kingdom of God, the Eternal State - clear through to Isaiah 66 – which equals 27 chapters. How many books are there

in the NT? 27 – beginning with Matthew. Isaiah 40:3 – “*The voice of one crying in the wilderness: Prepare the way of the LORD; make straight in the desert^a highway for our God.*” Where do we also read that? In Matthew – the first book of the NT – the start of the 27 books of the NT. “Comfort, yes, comfort My people” – the start of the last 27 chapters in Isaiah!! Isaiah, a book comprised of 66 chapters (39 + 27 = 66) has been labeled the Bible in miniature! The OT is portrayed in chapters 1 through 39 of Isaiah. The NT is portrayed in chapters 40 through 66 of Isaiah. The book of Matthew equates to chapter 40 in Isaiah – comfort, yes, comfort My people – the voice of one crying in the wilderness. . . .! John the Immerser was conveying comfort – the King is here. God hasn’t forgotten you.

The message of Isaiah: the same God who has judged Israel for sins will someday save Israel. The same God who promised terrible judgment on a sinning Israel, promises salvation on a repentant Israel. The message to Israel is not that you’ve been excluded, the message to Israel is comfort, comfort, comfort. Sin is paid for, all can be forgiven.

John’s appearance on the scene and his message from God signals the beginning of the official ministry of Jesus the Messiah. For 30 years, Jesus had been living in relative obscurity; but with the arrival of John is the announcement that triggers the beginning of Jesus’ official ministry.

John’s message was a shock to the Jewish leadership. John was challenging the prevailing Jewish belief that they were already saved - that they were already righteous. They were the seed of Abraham – and they were. They were the people of God – and they were. They were ones in the covenant – and they were (see Rom. 9:4-5). They were the chosen – and they were. BUT - they were NOT righteous apart from genuine faith in God (Hab. 2:4) – in Who He is and in what He has promised which points to His redemption through the Messiah! AND, immersion – that was a purification rite – the Jewish people call it a mikvah – it’s immersing yourself as a Jew (means a “collection” – as in a collection of water). Leviticus outlines ceremonial washings after going through a pollution of some sort – encountering the dead, after a women’s menstrual cycle, after being healed from leprosy, etc. (Lev. 15) Lev. 15 speaks to cleansing in water from defilement. The individual is “bathing” himself. Lev. 15:13 speaks specifically of cleansing in running water.

God told Israel that He would sprinkle them with clean water – Eze. 36:25. Water is a symbol for the Holy Spirit. (Joel 2:28 – pour out My Spirit on all flesh/rain down My Spirit [water drawing ceremony in Jesus’ day at Feast of Tabernacles]; Eze. 36:25-27 – sprinkle you with clean water and put My Spirit within you; John 7:38-39 – rivers of living water flowing out of the heart – this Jesus spoke of the Spirit) What does the Holy Spirit do when we accept Jesus? He cleanses us; AND – He sets us apart – He places us into the body of Christ.

Gentiles who came to believe in the God of Israel (called proselytes) - those believing Gentiles who had been outcasts – outside of the assembly of Israel – were immersed by the Jewish people. Those who had been OUTCASTS were now part of the assembly of Israel. BUT John was immersing Jews!!! Immersing Jews???? Unheard of! In essence he was telling them they were OUTCASTS – if they didn't repent! John was calling Israel to realize that their nationality couldn't save them. Their race couldn't save them. They thought it could – because Abraham was their father. Jewish thought had degenerated to the point of believing that “all Israel has a share in the world to come.” And that “Abraham sits at the gates of Gehenna to save any Israelite consigned thereto.” So, according to Pharisaic Judaism – to be born a Jew physically was enough to enter into the Kingdom. (That's why Nicodemus had such a tough time). The idea of someone else immersing them in water was telling them that they couldn't earn their salvation – and they did not like that message!

God's choosing Israel as a nation – for His purposes – never assured that they – within that nation – would all be saved individually. They had to individually forsake sin and be forgiven and declared righteous by God. YET - John was also calling the entire nation of Israel to repent because the kingdom wouldn't be given to Israel as a nation unless it was a righteous nation.

Was John standing out in the Jordan River – in the wilderness alone?

Matthew 3:5-6 - “*Then Jerusalem, all Judea, and all the region around the Jordan went out to him⁶ and were baptized by him in the Jordan, **confessing their sins.***”

Jerusalem was spilling out to hear John – all Judea was flocking to the Jordan – and all the area around the Jordan came to hear John. And, they weren't just going out to him – they were being baptized by him and confessing their sins.

There was nothing strange in the ceremony of immersion (baptize means to immerse). The uncommon aspect of this account – Jews were submitting to being immersed. Again, it was a common ritual for Gentiles who wanted to be included in the assembly of the Jews. For a Jew to submit to being immersed was to say, “I'm as bad as a heathen Gentile.” This is truly an act, on the Jews' part, of humble repentance, a radical submission to the Lord!

Matthew 3:7-10 – “*But when he saw many of the Pharisees and Sadducees coming to his baptism, he said to them, “Brood of vipers! Who warned you to flee from the wrath to come?⁸ Therefore bear fruits worthy of repentance,⁹ and do not think 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.¹⁰ 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.¹¹ I indeed baptize you with water unto 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.^[b]¹² His winnowing fan is in His hand, and He will*

thoroughly clean out His threshing floor, and gather His wheat into the barn; but He will burn up the chaff with unquenchable fire.”

Vipers – small, slithery, deadly desert snakes. Why lying still, they looked like harmless twigs or small sticks. Pick one up and you die! The Jewish religious leadership had fallen away from the truth of God’s word. They were men of death who proclaimed themselves to be sources of life. John questioned their character, laced into their hypocrisy, and warned them to flee God’s wrath. The Jewish religious leadership was focused on external piety. John told them to bear fruits worthy of repentance. They needed to repent and change direction – bear fruits demonstrating a change of direction.

PHARISEES/SADDUCEES

ORIGIN:

- The Sadducees came from the Priests.
- The Pharisees came from the Scribes.
- They became two opposing parties within Judaism during the 430 years – the Intertestamental years.
- It appears that during the Greek period, the Chief Priests and Rulers of the people took up an increasingly low attitude toward the law. The chief goal was no longer the carrying out of the law, but the maintenance and extension of their political power.

PHARISEES:

- Meaning – Separatists; the pious ones.
- They associated themselves with the law in order to observe it strictly in opposition to the encroachments of Hellenism (Greek thought).
- Characteristic feature: legal tendency.
- Orthodox Rabbis today claim that they are of the Pharisaical party.
- Teachings:
 - Immortality
 - “every soul is imperishable, but that only those of the righteous pass into another body, while those of the wicked are, on the contrary, punished with eternal torment” (Josephus, *Wars*, ii, 8, 14).
- “They hold the belief that an immortal strength belongs to souls, and that there are beneath the earth punishments and rewards for those who in life devoted themselves to virtue or vileness, and that eternal imprisonment is appointed for the latter, but the possibility of returning to life for the former” (Josephus, *Antiquities*, xviii, 1,3).
- This is the Jewish doctrine of retribution and resurrection (Dan. 12:2).
- Angels – the Pharisees believed in the existence of angels and spirits.
- Acknowledged the Oral Law.
- Providence/human freedom – everything that happens takes place through God’s providence, and that, consequently, in human actions, whether good or bad, a cooperation of God is to be admitted.
- Avoided all possible contact with heathen – lest they be defiled (avoided contact with the non-Pharisee).

SADDUCEES:

- Meaning – from the Hebrew, “sedeq” – righteous.
- Characteristic feature: social position; aristocratic.
- Teachings:
 - Did not believe in a resurrection of the body and retribution in a future life or in any personal continuity of the individual (Matt. 22:23; Mark 12:18; Luke 20:27; Josephus, *Wars*, ii 18,14).
 - Acknowledged only the written law as binding.
 - The Sadducees “would not consider themselves bound to accept any doctrine as an article of faith, unless it had been proclaimed by Moses, their great lawgiver;” “and it is certain that in the written law of the Pentateuch there is a total absence of any assertion by Moses of the resurrection of the dead.”
 - The Sadducees denied that there were angels or spirits; there were no independent spiritual realities besides God.
 - Greatly stressed human freedom. With a strong insistence upon personal liberty there came a decrease of the religious motive. They insisted that man was placed at his own disposal, and rejected the thought that a divine cooperation takes place in human actions.

Why did the Pharisees and Sadducees gather?

- The priests and Levites were sent by the Pharisees to ask questions – John 1:19ff - to check out John – to ask him questions.
- Since John was drawing such a crowd, they needed to find out about this individual.
- They were afraid of their position under Rome – being taken away. John was proclaiming the Kingdom of heaven. Rome wouldn’t take this lightly.

John’s baptism was the baptism of repentance, those who were baptized by him identified themselves with the message of John and prepared themselves to accept the Messiah. Those who were baptized by John identified themselves with the message of the preparation of the physical Kingdom – the Millennial Kingdom – (Messianic Kingdom – when the Messiah would reign from Jerusalem). The baptism of John was for the purpose of getting the nation of Israel ready for the arrival of their King!

In the baptism of the Church, one identifies with the death, burial and resurrection of the Messiah (Romans 6:3-4 – water baptism pictures the reality of being immersed into Jesus’ death when we trust in Him and are justified [declared righteous] [Gal. 2:20] and then being raised and walking in newness of life).

Matthew 3:11-12 – “*I indeed baptize you with water unto 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. His winnowing fan is in His hand, and He will*

thoroughly clean out His threshing floor, and gather His wheat into the barn; but He will burn up

John is content being number two. John consistently and passionately directed the people's attention to Jesus – their promised Messiah! John, who stated that he was not worthy to personally untie Jesus' sandal was willing to publicly stomp on the religious leaders' toes!

John's baptism (dip; immerse) was a water immersion. Jesus would immerse with the Holy Spirit.

Joel 2:28 – God promised that He would rain His Spirit upon the Jewish people.

Eze. 36:24-27 – God promised that He would cleanse Israel and give them a new heart and put His Spirit upon them.

Jesus will not drag people into the Kingdom of God kicking and screaming against their will. Thus John speaks of a baptism with the fire of God's judgment awaiting those who demand to live in rebellion against Him. John speaks of the Messiah's winnowing fork – an implement that separates the wheat (what is valuable) from the chaff (what is useless). The wheat – those who are repentant – will be gathered into God's barn where they will live with Him forever. The rebellious will be burned up – much like the chaff that's tossed into a flame.

Matthew 3:13-17 – *“Then Jesus came from Galilee to John at the Jordan to be baptized by him. And John tried to prevent Him, saying, ‘I need to be baptized by You, and are You coming to me?’ But Jesus answered and said to him, ‘Permit it to be so now, for thus it is fitting for us to fulfill all righteousness.’ Then he allowed Him. When He had been baptized, Jesus came up immediately from the water; and behold, the heavens were opened to Him, and He saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove and alighting upon Him. And suddenly a voice came from heaven, saying, ‘This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.’*

“Then Jesus came. . . .”

“came” speaks of the arrival of an official to take a public role.

Jesus traveled from Galilee to the Jordan – a 60+ mile walk! He's coming to begin His public ministry. He steps out of obscurity to be announced to Israel. Jesus waited 30 years in Nazareth performing simple duties at home – simple duties at the carpenter's shop – knowing all the time that He was God incarnate – God in the flesh; knowing all the time that there was a lost world. Knowing that there were those who were waiting and watching for Him. 30 years – living within God's plan of redemption – waiting for the right time. And – it was NOW!

BUT – Jesus came to John to be baptized? And, John’s baptism was the baptism of repentance? John attempts to not baptize Jesus (Matt. 3:14). Here we see a powerful passage in Scripture that teaches that Jesus is holy – that He is without sin – that He is not a sinner.

When John sees Jesus, he announces to the people, “Behold the Lamb of God Who takes away the sin of the world” (John 1:29) – Jesus doesn’t merely atone for sin – He doesn’t merely cover sin. The animal sacrifices in the OT atoned for sin – they could never take away sin (Heb. 10:4). Jesus redeems sinners – He buys us out of the market place – He takes away sin. Under the New Covenant our sins are removed (Heb. 8:7-12)!

Jesus desires John's baptism which is a baptism for sinners. Jesus is not a sinner. So – WHY is Jesus coming to be baptized by John?

Matthew 3:15 - *"And Jesus answering said unto him, 'Permit it to be so now, for thus it is fitting for us to fulfill all righteousness.' Then he consented to Him. And Jesus, when He was baptized, went up straightway out of the water."*

Jesus came into the world to identify with sinners. In the Book of Isaiah in chapter 53 it says, "He was numbered with the...transgressors" – the sinners. Jesus stepped out of obscurity, and He stepped into the public’s eye to declare the very reason for which He came, and that was to identify Himself with sinners. He Who had no sin, took His place among those who had no righteousness

As Jesus came up out of the water, the text tells us that the heavens were open to Him. Did the people see? The heavens were open to HIM!

Why do we have the Spirit appearing?

Firstly – here we have the anointing of Jesus by the Holy Spirit. Isa. 61:1-2 - *"The Spirit of the Lord GOD is upon Me, because the LORD has anointed Me to preach good tidings to the poor; He has sent Me to heal the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to those who are bound; to proclaim the acceptable year of the LORD, and the day of vengeance of our God; to comfort all who mourn."*

The Spirit anointed God the Son for service. In [Acts 10:38](#), the writer says, "God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Spirit."

The Spirit descended like a dove. Why a dove? (This is the only time the Spirit is ever seen as a dove) To a Jewish person – of what significance was a dove? Sacrifice! And the dove was the most common sacrificial animal. Bulls were for the rich. Lambs were for the upper middle class. A dove, that was the sin offering for almost everybody, the common folks. The Spirit of God descends in a form that speaks to God’s grace – God opening the way to all people – the lowest of the low.

The dove is also a reminder of the necessity that there MUST be a sacrifice for sin. Jesus, in His baptism – His identification with sinful man – was anointed not only for ministry but also for His death. He was anointed to be THE sacrifice.

There was one other part to His commissioning – the beginning of His public ministry - the Word of the Father.

Matthew 3:17 - "*And lo, a voice from Heaven, saying, 'This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.'*"

God was saying, I accept My Son as the sacrifice.

With Jesus in the Jordan, and the Spirit descending upon Him, and the Father calling out from heaven – what do we see? The Trinity of God.

“This is My beloved Son” is a direct quote from Psalm 2:7 – which speaks of the time when the Son would rule the world as the Messiah.

“In Whom I am well pleased” is a direct quote from Isaiah 42:1. In Isaiah 42, God the Father described His presentation of the Messiah to Israel – a nation that was spiritual blinded to God’s glory and deafened to God’s truth. Isaiah 42 along with chapters following through to Isaiah 53 speak to the Messiah as the Suffering Servant.

Did Israel hear that day?

Rabbis spoke of a “voice” from heaven – “bath-qol” – “daughter voice” – prior to Jesus’ baptism. This “daughter voice” would bring heaven’s testimony to perplexed Rabbis. And, this was said to have come after the voice of prophecy had ceased in Israel (during the 430 years).

Jesus is King but His throne, at His first coming, is going to be a cross. He is King, but He laid His life down to be a sin offering. He identifies with sinners and His baptism pictures His death. By being anointed with the Holy Spirit, He begins His ministry that will lead to His sacrifice. And, by God the Father’s words, He is accepted as the worthy sacrifice. What an announcement to the world!

Homework

Did you have any V8 moments?

What was your take-away?

How did God speak to you personally?

How is God preparing you for what He is calling you to do for Him?