

God as they ought in all matters and no matter what befalls them. Few truly know, understand, and obey God as their loving Father even though some may pray the words, Mt 6:9-OUR FATHER WHICH ART IN HEAVEN. God is referred to as *OUR FATHER* many times in the New Testament. Here is a list of some: 2 Thes 2:16; Ro 1:7; Col 1:3; 2 Col 1:2; Eph 1:2; Col 1:2; 1 Thes 1:1,3; 1 Thes 3:11,13; 1 Tim 1:2 and Phil 3.

Jesus is One with His Father. God, the Father, and God, the Son, and God, the Holy Spirit are one. It is His will that we be one with Him, as it is written:

Jn 10:30-*I AND MY FATHER ARE ONE.*

1 Jn 5:7-FOR THERE ARE THREE THAT BEAR RECORD IN HEAVEN, THE FATHER, THE WORD (which is Jesus) AND THE HOLY GHOST: AND *THESE THREE ARE ONE.*

Jn 17:22-23-AND THE GLORY WHICH THOU GAVEST ME I HAVE GIVEN THEM; THAT *THEY MAY BE ONE, EVEN AS WE ARE ONE: I IN THEM, AND THOU IN ME, THAT THEY MAY BE MADE PERFECT IN ONE; AND THAT THE WORLD MAY KNOW THAT THOU HAST SENT ME, AND HAST LOVED THEM, AS THOU HAST LOVED ME.*

God, the Father, as the Father over His family, the family of those committed to Him by faith in Jesus Christ, He accepts the responsibility and obligation to meet the needs of all His children. In doing so, His children that seek first the Kingdom of God and His righteousness-ref Mt 6:3; Lk 12:22-32, are released from the anxiety of what they shall eat and wear, even obtaining needed material things. Thus, they can focus themselves on Jesus and doing those works which He has called them to do.

The idea that God in heaven was the Father of Jesus Christ and that one could have a close, loving, intimate relationship with God was a shock to the Jews-ref Jn 5:18-47.

The Trinity is referred to many times in the Old Testament as well as the New Testament. Some of these are covered in this commentary.

Up to this point in the chronological study, most of the information that has been presented on each subject has been presented in only one of the 4 Gospels at a time.

Regarding the next few verses and others further on, much of the identical information is presented in 2 or more of the 4 Gospel accounts. By comparing and combining each account or each verse, a much fuller understanding may come forth for the serious student of the Bible. All born again Christians ought to be serious students of God's Word. All born again Christians ought to have a heart that is hungry to learn more of Jesus. Note Chronological Gospel #5 to see how this was all put together. The verses continue—

JOHN BAPTIST—PREPARE YE

THE WAY

29½ TO 30 YEARS

Mt 3:1. (Now) (DURING) THOSE DAYS CAME JOHN THE BAPTIST (or the Immerser arrived-JNT) PREACHING IN THE WILDERNESS (or desert) OF (JUDEA),

Mt 3:1. (Now) (DURING) THOSE DAYS. John (the Baptist) was born approximately 6 months before Jesus. It appears his ministry began about 6 months prior to the ministry of Jesus. (Information regarding the birth of John the Baptist begins at Lk 1:13). He was from the priestly family of Levi-ref Lk 1:5. Since we know that Jesus' ministry began when He was about 30, we can surmise that John Baptist's ministry began when he was also about 30. The verse continues

CAME JOHN. His given name was John, not John the Baptist. The verse continues—

THE BAPTIST (or the Immerser arrived-JNT). John could be called John the Baptizer. This is the earliest point in the Scriptures that John is called the Baptist. Until he started baptizing, it appears he was only called John.

Jn 1:6 tells us that John was SENT FROM GOD. He came—

PREACHING. Preaching and teaching is how God chose to deliver the Good News. The verse continues—

IN THE WILDERNESS (or desert) OF (JUDEA). The area that John appears to have been in is the southern part of the Jordan River near where it empties into the Dead Sea. To the west is a barren, hilly desert region. In a straight line, Jerusalem would have been about 20 miles west of there. The lower Jordan is where Elijah spent the last days of his ministry-ref 2 Ki 2:1-13. Jericho is mentioned in verse 4 and 15. Lk 3:2 shows us that the WORD OF GOD CAME UNTO JOHN...IN THE WILDERNESS. John's ministry began in the wilderness, which is the same place the Word of God came to him. The first thing it appears he did was to preach Jesus-ref Jn 1:15. There is no reason to believe through Scripture that

John had any connection to any of the excavated Essene communities or any other sect as some have suggested. His appearance is a fulfillment of Isa 40:3 and others as should be illustrated further in the text. He came in the spirit of Elijah—ref Mt 11:14, 17:10-13.

Lk 3:3 (pt 1). AND HE (WENT) INTO ALL THE (REGION) (AROUND) (the) JORDAN,

Lk 3:3 (pt 1). AND HE, which is John the Baptist— (WENT) INTO ALL THE (REGION) (AROUND) (the) JORDAN. After the Word of God came to John, he moved around the Jordan River area as he taught. He did not stay in one place all the time. The lower Jordan stretches from the southern part of the Sea of Galilee to the northern part of the Dead Sea. The verses continue—

Mt 3:2. AND (PROCLAIMING THE MESSAGE), REPENT YE (or turn from your sins to God-JNT): FOR THE KINGDOM OF HEAVEN IS (NEAR).

Mt 3:2. AND (PROCLAIMING THE MESSAGE). John came preaching, as it is written, 1 Cor 1:21-FOR AFTER THAT IN THE WISDOM OF GOD THE WORLD BY WISDOM KNEW NOT GOD, IT PLEASSED GOD BY THE FOOLISHNESS OF PREACHING TO SAVE THEM THAT BELIEVE. John proclaimed— **REPENT YE: (or turn from your sins to God-JNT).** John the Baptist began his ministry about 6 months before Jesus began His. According to Matthew’s account, the first message that John the Baptist taught was repentance. This is what the people and religious leaders alike needed.

REPENTANCE

One might say that repentance is to correct the error of one’s thinking and one’s ways. Rethink yourselves. Reconsider your ways. Change your mind. Recognize and consider that you are going in a wrong direction. Think again, and think what is right in the eyes of holy God, regarding your thoughts, and the attitude you have, and the things which you do. Rethink again regarding sin and holiness.

The change in your thinking (repentance) will produce a change in your attitude and what you do and don’t do. It will cause you to be more careful in what you say and do, so it will be in line with God’s Word. Repentance will produce a new life for those that are truly sorry for their sins and wrong thinking, if they are willing to let God change them. It will cause a person to stop doing evil and begin doing right.

When repentance reaches the heart, the heart itself is judged. Most hearts will cast down repentance as applying to oneself. Only a few hearts will receive it. Only a few hearts will rethink itself and repent. The heart inherently does not want to believe it has been wrong all this time—for it is desperately wicked. The heart wants to point the finger at other people and circumstances, not itself. The sores (or sin) each of us have must be searched out and found before they can be healed. That bears repeating. The sores (or sin) each of us have must be searched out and found before they can be healed. Repentance begins a lifelong process of self-examination, but most give up. Most fall by the wayside and go back to their old ungodly ways and attitudes. Their old thinking reflects the thinking and attitudes which are after the ways of the world.

Repentance brings a pardon for one’s sins. It softens one’s heart. It softens one’s heart to correctly receive and understand the Word of God. A Christ-like, childlike attitude begins to come forth. A lack of repentance hardens one’s heart toward correction. A lack of repentance or a falling away from repentance eventually leads to the second death, which is eternal.

Repentance is what people need today. How regretful it is today that in many churches the word repent is seldom or never heard. There are many churches that are called *Christian*, but only a few have Christ inside. Most have Christ outside knocking on the door, but won’t open the door and let Him in—ref Rev 3:20. There are many blind leaders of the blind, who are very popular with the masses. There are relatively few leaders that can see, which are despised by many.

REPENTANCE (More on Repentance)

Regretfully, this message is seldom heard in most churches in this generation. It is seldom heard in the Roman Catholic, Episcopalian, Lutheran, Methodist, Presbyterian, and most other churches, even though it is written in Lk 13:3-I TELL YOU, NAY: BUT, EXCEPT YE REPENT, YE SHALL ALL LIKEWISE PERISH. Repentance comes as a result of God’s mercy. It comes as a result of conviction from God regarding sin. It comes because God has prepared a person’s heart to hear and receive as a little child. A person, from their heart, has a change of mind, a change of attitude toward God, toward sin, toward self, and toward God’s Word. Repentance says from the heart—God is right, and “I” am wrong—resulting in Godly sorrow for sin, fear of God and of His judgment. This change of attitude results in repentance and asking for God’s mercy. A person, who will not admit they are a sinner and have come short of the glory of God, has no hope.

A person, who will not admit they are a sinner and have come short of the glory of God, has no hope.

The fruit of repentance leads a person to change by the power of God, from the ways of this world to the ways of God as outlined in the Bible. The fruit of repentance involves putting off self-will and allowing God's will to prevail in one's life. The fruit of repentance becomes evident as a person's direction in life changes. As a result of repentance and faith in Jesus Christ as one's only hope of salvation, a person now obeys God's command. They get baptized by immersion in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. A conversion takes place. A person is born-again.

To be blunt—all those throughout the world that have not repented of their sins and received Jesus Christ as their only hope of salvation, according to the Scriptures, are on their way to hell. Proclaiming to have faith in Christ without repentance is not true Biblical faith. Do you have ears to hear God's Word and the billions already in hell that are weeping and gnashing their teeth? The verses continue—

John the Baptist proclaimed, repent—

FOR THE KINGDOM OF HEAVEN IS (NEAR). Some might say the Kingdom from heaven is near. The reason John gave that people were to repent was because the KINGDOM OF HEAVEN (or kingdom of the heavens) WAS NEAR OR AT HAND. In other words, he was saying the Messiah is at hand. In Dan 2:44, it refers to the God of heaven setting up a Kingdom. As we know now, this will take place when Jesus returns at the time of Armageddon. The message of the coming Kingdom is covered in the Old Testament and was expected, however the message that repentance was necessary because of the coming Kingdom was unexpected. While many did repent, many also would not. Others thought that just because they were descended from Abraham, they would be accepted in the eyes of God. Most had little idea just how far from God's law they had fallen and did not recognize their need for personal repentance.

As this commentary is being written, the rapture of God's children is near. The message of repentance should be proclaimed like never before, yet no such message is sounding forth as it should. Many people have never even heard the term *rapture*. This lack of knowledge, or lukewarmness, or confusion on this subject is one of the many signs of the times that reveals that the Rapture or (translation) or (being caught up) is near.

Mk 1:4 (pt 1). (So) JOHN (the Immerser) DID BAPTIZE IN THE WILDERNESS (or desert),

Mk 1:4 (pt 1). (So) JOHN (the Immerser) DID BAPTIZE IN THE WILDERNESS (or desert). The Word of God came to John, he preached and baptized. All this took place in the wilderness in all the region around the Jordan. Chronologically, this may be the first mention of baptism in the New Testament. John's ministry was mainly preaching and baptizing.

John may have baptized in the wilderness, as spiritual Israel was a wilderness. It was all but dead to the correct teachings of God. The verses continue—

Lk 3:3 (pt 2), ref Mk 1:4 (pt 2) PREACHING THE BAPTISM OF REPENTANCE FOR THE (FORGIVENESS) OF SINS (or proclaiming an immersion involving turning to God from sin in order to be forgiven-JNT);

Lk 3:3 (pt 2), ref Mk 1:4 (pt 2). PREACHING THE BAPTISM OF REPENTANCE. Baptism is the result of a person repenting. It may be put this way—in order to be baptized, repentance was required. If a person truly Biblically repents, then they should certainly seek to be baptized by full immersion in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. (Note-just because a person does get baptized, does not mean he has truly repented, nor does it mean that he is saved.)

John baptizing people occurred prior to the death and resurrection of Christ. It was a baptism that was done as a result of a person's repentance. People that were baptized by John's baptism were looking forward to the coming of the Messiah, or after the appearance of Jesus—they believed that He was now come. People that believed on Christ at this time did not yet receive the Holy Ghost, as it is written-Jn 7:39-(BUT THIS SPAKE HE OF THE SPIRIT, WHICH THEY THAT BELIEVE ON HIM SHOULD RECEIVE: FOR THE HOLY GHOST WAS NOT YET GIVEN; BECAUSE THAT JESUS WAS NOT YET GLORIFIED.)

The baptism that was done *after* Christ rose from the dead is also a baptism that is a result of repentance-ref Acts 2:28. It is to be administered to those that believe on Christ-ref Mk 16:16. However, a person cannot be baptized into Christ if they do not believe on Christ. It is also being baptized into His death and resurrection-ref Ro 6:3-5. One might say that when we are buried with Him by baptism, we are to die to self and then as it is written-EVEN SO WE ALSO SHOULD WALK IN NEWNESS OF LIFE-Ro 6:4. As should be mentioned several times in this commentary-infant baptism, sprinkling baptism, and any baptism done prior to a person repenting and believing on Christ with all their heart is no baptism at all.

The message of repentance is so vastly important, that it is first mentioned by Mark in chapter 1, verse 4.

John was preaching the baptism of repentance—

FOR THE (FORGIVENESS) OF SINS (or proclaiming an immersion involving turning to God from sin in order to be forgiven-JNT). The message portrayed in this verse is seldom proclaimed in churches today. The JNT conveys the idea that baptism is an indication that a person is turning to God from sin. Infant and sprinkling baptism have replaced God's way of baptism in many misled churches.

Forgiveness from the dictionary means: to excuse for a fault or offense. To stop feeling anger or resentment against. To absolve from payment. Biblically, it means the sin debt (which all have, for all have sinned) that results in the second death is paid in full because of Christ's sacrifice. The result of being forgiven is—it is as if it never happened. It is erased and forgotten by God through the blood of Christ, as He paid the sin debt for all that would repent and trust in Him.

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REPENTANCE

For more on "Repentance," see Mt 3:6; 3:8; 3:11 (pt 2); Lk 3:18; Jn 3:18.

Repentance can be said to mean: a change of mind and a complete turn around from the heart— which results in: the change and turn around of a person's attitude, emotions, direction, thoughts, behavior, fruit, ways, and works away from sin, selfishness, and worldliness—

to: the ways of God and His Word.

God creates within a person a new heart, which results in a new life and new thinking.

The old is put off, and the new is put on.

Those that once disagreed with the Bible, now believe it is completely true. The unholy becomes holy. The prideful becomes humble, meek, and childlike. The dishonest becomes honest. The unkind becomes kind. The unforgiving becomes forgiving. The unjust becomes just. The accuser stops accusing. The complainer stops complaining. The sinner becomes freed from sin. The self-centered becomes Christ-centered. By the grace of God, those that were hell bound become heavenly bound. Their sins are pardoned.

Repentance is a change of mind from dependence on one's own efforts and self, to depending and trusting totally on God—ref Mt 18:3. God is our Father, and as a little child depends completely upon his father, a child of God depends totally upon his heavenly Father. When our heavenly Father tells us how, when, where, and what to do, He is always right. He will meet all our needs (not necessarily our desires). There should be no argument (rebellion and stubbornness). When we come to God, we become a *child* of God, not an adult of God. We need to admit our immaturity and inability to live apart from our heavenly Father. Few people will ever humble themselves in this manner.

Before repentance, a person produced fruit (attitude and works) according to the ways of this world and self.

As a result of repentance from the heart, a person's fruit (attitude and works) begin to mirror the ways of God by the power of the Holy Spirit.

Hardness is replaced with softness, with childlikeness to correction from God and His Word. Liars stop lying, thieves stop stealing, drunkards stop drinking, smokers stop smoking, drug addicts stop taking drugs, people involved in sex outside of marriage stop, and homosexuals stop. Pride and conceit is replaced with humbleness and meekness. Hate and ungodly anger is replaced with love.

Repentance is not turning over a new leaf and making a New Year's resolution. It is an inner change that takes place through the power of God in a person's heart.

Initially, a person repents to come to God. However, after this, repentance is a daily thing. There are many that repent one day under some emotional circumstance, but the very next day they go back to their ungodly ways. That is not true repentance. We may say that we begin with repentance, but continue steadfast through faith. Faith only comes from hearing or dwelling in and understanding the Word of God. Faith grows as we hear, read, study and obey God's Word. As we are faithful in this, understanding also grows. Little Word and little obedience equals little faith. Lots of God's Word and obedience equals great faith.

Repentance admits the following: it has no hope of salvation or claim upon God without repentance and trust in Jesus Christ.

Repentance may be defined in this manner. It is a total sacrifice and surrender of oneself to obey and submit to the Word of God in all situations. Anything short of this is sin. Dependence on one's own efforts apart from God is sin.

It means deny self and take up your cross daily and follow Jesus—ref Lk 9:23.

You come broken, humbled, in a helpless, hopeless, unworthy state, renouncing everything, and turn to Jesus as your only

hope of salvation. You come acknowledging that He is God Almighty and you are not worthy to tie His shoe laces.

It means as Job said in Job 42:6-I ABHOR (or hate or despise) MYSELF, AND REPENT IN DUST AND ASHES. This is not the kind of repentance that is being taught in most churches today, because most people do not want to come to Jesus by the way of the cross and the way of truth.

Preaching such as WHOSOEVER HE BE OF YOU THAT FORSAKETH NOT ALL THAT HE HATH, HE CANNOT BE MY DISCIPLE is rarely heard or understood any more-Lk 14:33.

John the Baptist said-Jn 3:30-HE MUST INCREASE, BUT I MUST DECREASE. This applies to all that repent.

REPENTANCE MEANS STOP, TURN, AND CHANGE

According to *Webster's New World Dictionary*, the word "repent" means the following: "To feel such regret over (an action, intention), as to change one's mind, etc." This is further confirmed in the Bible, as we read in 2 Cor 7:10-FOR GODLY SORROW WORKETH REPENTANCE TO SALVATION. The next part of the verse states, NOT TO BE REPENTED OF. In other words, you turn away from all willful sin, and you do not go back. The next part of the verse gives us a warning: BUT THE SORROW OF THE WORLD WORKETH DEATH. A person's attitude about sin changes. Before salvation, a person enjoyed sin. They were not concerned about disobeying God. They followed their own moral or immoral convictions. Their own desires were more important to them than obeying God. They were the center of their own so-called universe. But now, they begin to hate every sinful or evil way. It is written, YE THAT LOVE THE LORD, HATE EVIL-Ps 97:10. THE FEAR OF THE LORD IS TO HATE EVIL-Pv 8:13.

Thus, repentance (to repent) means we admit we are a sinner, and we feel terrible about our sins. We are sorry about our sins. We deeply regret what we have done and are willing to turn from all sin. We change direction.

We are willing to change our mind about our sins. Our lifestyle changes.

We are willing to forsake all our sins and give them up. To put it straight forward, we are willing to "stop all willful sin." We do a complete turn around. This is repentance, which is an absolute condition for salvation.

Psalms 119:59,60 gives us another definition of repentance. It is written, I HAVE CONSIDERED MY WAYS AND HAVE TURNED MY STEPS TO YOUR STATUTES. I WILL HASTEN AND NOT DELAY TO OBEY YOUR COMMANDS-NIV.

Some people have stopped doing a particular sin not because of true repentance or Godly sorrow about their sin, but because of certain circumstances. One of many possible examples is a person might stop drinking or smoking for health reasons. Another example, is a person might stop having sex outside of marriage because of the fear of getting AIDS. This is not repentance. "Turning over a new leaf," as some people may say, is not true repentance.

Once a person truly repents, their parents, relatives, employers, husband or wife, friends, and others may persecute them. Other things may happen. Incredible temptations may occur. It is written, regarding ungodliness: 1 Pe 4:4, 12-14-WHEREIN THEY (the unsaved) THINK IT STRANGE THAT YE RUN NOT WITH THEM TO THE SAME EXCESS OF RIOT, SPEAKING EVIL OF YOU: BELOVED, THINK IT NOT STRANGE CONCERNING THE FIERY TRIAL WHICH IS TO TRY YOU, AS THOUGH SOME STRANGE THING HAPPENED UNTO YOU: BUT REJOICE, INASMUCH AS YE ARE PARTAKERS OF CHRIST'S SUFFERINGS; THAT, WHEN HIS GLORY SHALL BE REVEALED, YE MAY BE GLAD ALSO WITH EXCEEDING JOY. IF YE BE REPROACHED FOR THE NAME OF CHRIST, HAPPY ARE YE; FOR THE SPIRIT OF GLORY AND OF GOD RESTETH UPON YOU: ON THEIR PART HE IS EVIL SPOKEN OF, BUT ON YOUR PART HE IS GLORIFIED.

We are to repent no matter what the cost and not go back into willful sin. We stand by faith-ref 2 Cor 1:24.

REPENTANCE MEANS TO PUT OFF THE OLD AND PUT ON THE NEW

Repentance means that we put off the old man, the old ways, the past; and we put on the new man, the new ways, the future.

It is written, PURGE OUT THEREFORE (or get rid of) THE OLD LEAVEN (or sin), THAT YE MAY BE A NEW LUMP (or a new creation in Christ)-1 Cor 5:7.

THEREFORE IF ANY MAN BE IN CHRIST, HE IS A NEW CREATURE: OLD THINGS ARE PASSED AWAY; BEHOLD, ALL THINGS ARE BECOME NEW-2 Cor 5:17.

We also PUT OFF CONCERNING THE FORMER CONVERSATION THE OLD MAN (or the old ways), WHICH IS CORRUPT ACCORDING TO THE DECEITFUL LUSTS; AND BE RENEWED IN THE SPIRIT OF YOUR MIND; AND

THAT YE PUT ON THE NEW MAN, WHICH AFTER GOD IS CREATED IN **RIGHTEOUSNESS AND TRUE HOLINESS-Eph 4:22-24.**

LIE NOT ONE TO ANOTHER, SEEING THAT YE HAVE PUT OFF THE OLD MAN WITH HIS DEEDS (our old sinful ways are put off, they are repented of); AND HAVE PUT ON THE NEW MAN, WHICH IS RENEWED IN KNOWLEDGE AFTER THE IMAGE OF HIM THAT CREATED HIM-Col 3:9,10. We can only be renewed in knowledge through God's Word. We cannot be renewed in the wisdom that man gives.

NO MAN PUTTETH A PIECE OF NEW CLOTH UNTO AN OLD GARMENT, FOR THAT WHICH IS PUT IN TO FILL IT UP TAKETH FROM THE GARMENT, AND THE RENT IS MADE WORSE-Mt 9:16. This happens because THE PIECE THAT WAS TAKEN OUT OF THE NEW AGREETH NOT WITH THE OLD-Lk 5:36.

NEITHER DO MEN PUT NEW WINE INTO OLD BOTTLES: ELSE THE BOTTLES BREAK, AND THE WINE RUNNETH OUT, AND THE BOTTLES PERISH: BUT THEY PUT NEW WINE INTO NEW BOTTLES, AND BOTH ARE PRESERVED-Mt 9:17.

The Holy Spirit is not to be put into an unrepentant sinner else the bottles break, and the wine (or Holy Spirit) runneth out, and the bottles or person perishes. But rather, the Holy Spirit is put into new bottles (a repentant person that has put away sin, that has put off sin, that has put off the old ways, that has put off the old man) and both are preserved.

REPENTANCE ALSO MEANS TO "START" AND "OBEY"

Not only do we stop doing those things which are wrong, but we "start" doing those things which are right, and "obey" God's Word. For the person that can read—the number one thing he begins doing is reading and studying the Bible. It is written, AS NEWBORN BABES, *DESIRE* (or craves or are starving for) THE SINCERE MILK OF THE WORD, THAT YE MAY GROW THEREBY: IF SO BE YE HAVE TASTED THAT THE LORD IS GRACIOUS-1 Pe 2:2,3. First a baby must be born. Then it needs to be fed good milk to grow. First a person must be born again. Then, it is only through God's Word that we can learn what is right and wrong in God's eyes. It is only by God's pure Word that we can grow in faith, because faith comes only by the Word of God (the Bible). Worldly stories such as is heard in most churches does not help a person to grow.

A person that can read and claims they are saved, but only reads a few chapters a week, would appear to be misled. It would appear true repentance has not taken place. It would seem that they are not serious about their salvation, and obeying God's Word. It appears the desire for God's Word that is in a newborn Christian is not present in them-ref 1 Pe 2:2.

They may have stopped willful sin, but have not begun to *FOLLOW JESUS*. For Jesus would lead them to begin reading and studying HIS Word heavily so they can grow. Just as a new plant in a garden needs water, so the new born-again Christian needs God's Word. If you gave a new plant in a garden only a few drops of water a week, it would soon wilt and then die. If you give a new born-again Christian only one, or two chapters a week, they may soon die, or perhaps they never were born-again to start with.

It is written, LEARN OF ME-Mt 11:29. We are to hear God's Word, study God's Word, meditate in God's Word, and read God's Word. If a person claims they are born-again, yet God's Word does not take first place in their life, then it is a good indicator that the person is not truly born-again, but only thinks they are. They are deceived.

To follow Jesus is, number one-to learn HIS Word and obey it. It is written, Mt 4:19-FOLLOW ME. Mt 8:22-FOLLOW ME. Mt 9:9-FOLLOW ME. Mt 16:24-IF ANY MAN WILL COME AFTER ME, LET HIM DENY HIMSELF, AND TAKE UP HIS CROSS, AND FOLLOW ME. Mt 19:21-COME AND FOLLOW ME. Many more times these words appear in the Bible, also. The message is loud and clear. A person, even a preacher, a denominational head, even someone that goes forth to evangelize, BUT does not meditate, study, read, hear, learn, and obey God's Word is not truly following Jesus. As alluded to already, a person that can read, but reads very little of the Bible and makes excuses certainly does not appear to be FOLLOWING JESUS. They are not serious about God's Word, which is Jesus. Repentance may never have taken place. A fruit of repentance is doing what God's Word says. A person that does not LABOUR in God's Word, or that does not dwell in God's Word, cannot grow in faith, in knowledge, in wisdom, and in understanding.

The evidence of repentance is good fruit (attitude and works). It is written, WHEREFORE BY THEIR FRUITS YE SHALL KNOW THEM-Mt 7:20.

* The willful, intentional practice of sin stops. It does not slow down. It does not get reduced. As said, the willful, intentional practice of sin—it stops. As some of this was indicated previously, it needs to be said again.

* Lying stops.

- * Deceitfulness stops.
 - * Stealing stops. Restitution begins to take place.
 - * Hatred ceases.
 - * Forgiveness for all who have wronged us takes place.
 - * Sex, outside of a marriage recognized by God, stops.
 - * Fornication stops.
 - * If a person is not married according to God's Word, then a separation takes place until the marriage is accomplished in accordance to God's Word. Believers dating unbelievers is to stop. The person should also be baptized by full immersion afterwards.
 - * Selfishness stops.
 - * Smoking and alcohol stops.
 - * Ancestor worship, and worshipping angels, and demons, and "so-called" saints and idols of every kind including nature, stops. Worship is reserved for the Jesus of the Bible. He is JESUS CHRIST IS COME IN THE FLESH-2 Jn 7.
 - * Praying to the dead, or to, or through "so-called" saints, or Mary stops. Prayer beads stop.
 - * Astrology stops.
 - * A person begins to fear God as the Bible says.
 - * Studying and obeying the Bible begins.
 - * Doing God's will begins.
 - * Following and obeying God begins from the heart.
- (See Mt 3:8 for more commentary on repentance.)

The worthiness of Christ cannot be attained until the unworthiness of self is understood-ref Rev 5:9; Lk 15:21; Lk 7:6; Heb 11:38; Ro 1:32; Acts 13:25. The verses continue—

Mt 3:3 (pt 1). FOR THIS IS (THE MAN) THAT WAS SPOKEN OF BY THE PROPHET (ISAIAH),

Mt 3:3 (pt 1). **FOR THIS IS (THE MAN).** The man being prophesied about is John the Baptist. **THAT WAS SPOKEN OF BY THE PROPHET (ISAIAH), SAYING.** Isaiah wrote the following passage about 712 B.C. The verses continue—

Mk 1:2 (pt 1), ref Lk 3:4 (pt 1). AS IT IS WRITTEN IN

Mk 1:2 (pt 1), ref Lk 3:4 (pt 1). **AS IT IS WRITTEN IN.** These are words that are repeated many times in the New Testament. They usually refer to passages that appear in the Old Testament as we know it today. The verses continue—
IN

Lk 3:4 (pt 2). THE BOOK OF THE WORDS OF

Lk 3:4 (pt 2). **THE BOOK OF THE WORDS OF**

Mk 1:2 (pt 2), ref Lk 3:4 (pt 3). (ISAIAH THE PROPHET),

Mk 1:2 (pt 2), ref Lk 3:4 (pt 3). **(ISAIAH THE PROPHET).** Mark's Gospel uses the words, AS IT IS WRITTEN IN THE PROPHETS—indicating more than one. Two prophets spoke some of the words: Isaiah and Malachi (note further on). John puts his stamp of approval on the prophets as being from God. In a manner of speaking, they put their stamp of approval on John the Baptist as he fulfilled the prophecy.

For those Jews that believed the Old Testament prophets, using their prophecies was a power tool. The verses continue—

Mt 3:3 (pt 2) ref Lk 3:4 (pt 4). SAYING,

Mt 3:3 (pt 2) ref Lk 3:4 (pt 4). **SAYING,**

Mk 1:2 (pt 3). BEHOLD, I (will) SEND MY MESSENGER (AHEAD OF YOU), WHICH SHALL PREPARE (YOUR) WAY BEFORE (YOU).

Mk 1:2 (pt 3). **(a) BEHOLD, I (will) SEND MY MESSENGER AHEAD OF YOU),** Now that the passage has been fulfilled, we know that it was saying that God would send John the Baptist ahead of His only begotten Son which is Jesus Christ. The verse continues—

(b) WHICH SHALL PREPARE (YOUR) WAY BEFORE (YOU). John the Baptist would prepare the way before Jesus Christ. As a soldier might go before his company, or workmen might go before a vehicle to make sure the roads were

Mt 3:3 (pt 3).), **THE VOICE OF ONE CRYING** (or calling) **IN THE WILDERNESS** (or desert), **PREPARE YE** (or make ready) **THE WAY (FOR) THE LORD** (or Adonai), **MAKE (STRAIGHT PATHS FOR HIM!-JNT)**. (ref Jn 1:23)

Lk 3:5. **EVERY VALLEY** (or ravine) **SHALL BE FILLED** (in), **AND EVERY MOUNTAIN AND HILL SHALL BE BROUGHT LOW** (or leveled off); **AND THE CROOKED** (or winding roads) **SHALL BE MADE STRAIGHT**, **AND THE ROUGH WAYS** (or roads) **SHALL BE MADE SMOOTH**;

Lk 3:6. **AND ALL (MANKIND) SHALL SEE THE SALVATION** (or deliverance) **OF GOD**.

clear, or advertising might proceed the circus coming to town, so John Baptist went before the Lord to prepare and announce to the people the coming of the Messiah. Jesus Christ confirmed that it was John the Baptism which fulfilled this prophecy in Mt 11:9. The verses continue—

Mt 3:3 (pt 3). (c) **THE VOICE OF ONE CRYING (or calling)**. The words crying or calling reflects the love and concern God has for people. It reflects what John felt in his heart. John said in Jn 1:23, **I AM THE VOICE**. God was speaking His words through John. He is crying or calling out to the people. It is not the unemotional, calm, dead preaching which permeates most churches today. The verse continues—

IN THE WILDERNESS (or desert),

(d) PREPARE YE (or make ready)

THE WAY (FOR) THE LORD (or Adonai). John was referring to preparing for the coming of the Messiah. We may say that John was announcing the coming of the Messiah and telling people to prepare their hearts and make themselves ready. By John the Baptist using this passage from Malachi, it proves the one that was coming was the long awaited Messiah, and John was the one that Malachi prophesied would announce to the people to prepare.

Some of the words that John spoke were spoken by two prophets—note the italics. Mal 3:1-*BEHOLD, I WILL SEND MY MESSENGER, AND HE SHALL PREPARE THE WAY BEFORE ME*: **AND THE LORD, WHOM YE SEEK, SHALL SUDDENLY COME TO HIS TEMPLE, EVEN THE MESSENGER OF THE COVENANT, WHOM YE DELIGHT IN: BEHOLD, HE SHALL COME, SAITH THE LORD OF HOSTS.** Verse two (not quoted here) covers His second coming which John did not quote. There is also a similarity to Ex 23:20. John changed the words from Malachi *THE WAY BEFORE ME* to *YOUR WAY BEFORE YOU*.

The verse continues—

(e) MAKE HIS PATHS STRAIGHT (or STRAIGHT PATHS FOR HIM!).

Some of the other words that John spoke are in Isa 40:3-*THE VOICE OF HIM THAT CRIETH IN THE WILDERNESS, PREPARE YE THE WAY OF THE LORD, MAKE STRAIGHT IN THE DESERT A HIGHWAY FOR OUR GOD*. John omitted the words *IN THE DESERT* and changed the words *A HIGHWAY FOR OUR LORD* to *PATHS FOR HIM*.

Both passages as spoken in the Old Testament reflect the first coming of Christ as well as His return.

Note this verse announcing the first coming of the Lord appears in all 4 Gospels-ref Mt 3:3; Mk 1:3; Lk 3:4; and Jn 1:23.

John then went on and quoted passages from Isa 40:4 and 5. They appear only in Luke's Gospel. It is actually announcing the second coming of the Lord. The two verses from Luke's Gospel (Lk 3:5,6) covers what things will be like after the Battle of Armageddon as well as the deliverance of the Lord.

Lk 3:5. (f) **EVERY VALLEY (or ravine) SHALL BE FILLED (in)**. This shall happen during the Battle of Armageddon as the greatest earthquake in the history of the world occurs. The verses continue—

(g) AND EVERY MOUNTAIN AND HILL SHALL BE BROUGHT LOW (or leveled off). This shall happen during the Battle of Armageddon also. The verses continue—

(h) AND THE CROOKED (or winding roads) SHALL BE MADE STRAIGHT. This shall happen during the Battle of Armageddon also. The verses continue—

(i) AND THE ROUGH WAYS (or roads) SHALL BE MADE SMOOTH (ref Isa 40:4). This shall happen during the Battle of Armageddon also. F, g, h, and i should happen as the great earthquake strikes the entire earth. As Armageddon draws to a close, the earth shall be a vastly different place, both physically and spiritually. Sin shall be removed from the earth in one day-ref Zech 3:9. (a) to (i)—eight things are mentioned.

While f, g, h, and i refer to His second coming, they can also refer to our hearts being prepared by God for repentance. Indeed, there should be no pride among men in that day but men's hearts failing them for fear. A person that repents is brought and made low. Those that do not repent shall be brought even lower-to hell.

Lk 3:6. **AND ALL (MANKIND) SHALL SEE THE SALVATION (or deliverance) OF GOD**. At the time of Armageddon, immediately after the tribulation of those days, Jesus shall return in power and great glory. All shall see the deliverance of God (ref Isa 40:5).

It is written in Rev 1:7-*BEHOLD, HE COMETH WITH CLOUDS; AND EVERY EYE SHALL SEE HIM, AND THEY*

ALSO WHICH PIERCED HIM: AND ALL KINDREDS OF THE EARTH SHALL WAIL BECAUSE OF HIM.

Commentary scriptures continue on pg. 131

BATTLE OF ARMAGEDDON AND ITS RESULTS

The greatest earthquake in the history of the world and the Battle of Armageddon immediately after the tribulation will cause the earth to be shaken so much, that the mountains shall be much lower, the valleys shall be filled in and the rough places shall be smoothed out.

The tongue of the Egyptian sea shall be destroyed. First, the mountains are moved. They are shaken. The mountains melt like wax. Then, mountains of the world disappear. Where there were mountains, there should be plateaus and rolling hills. The mountains, as they are, will no longer be found.

There will continue to be hills. Upon every high mountain and hill there will be rivers and streams of water.

The tall buildings of the world fall. The cities of the world are destroyed.

Where there were islands in the oceans, there will be nothing.

The foundations of the world will be discovered.

The earth melts.

The earth shall suffer desolations.

The earth shall be utterly broken down.

The earth shall be clean dissolved or split asunder.

The earth shall be emptied and spoiled.

The earth shall be removed or sway like a hut in the wind.

The earth shall be moved exceedingly or completely shaken.

It shall go back and forth like a drunkard.

The earth shall remove or be shaken out of her place.

The earth shall be turned upside down or made a waste.

Every valley shall be filled.

Every mountain and hill shall be brought low.

The crooked shall be made straight.

The rough ways shall be made smooth.

The earth will become desolate.

The landscape of Israel will be greatly changed; its borders will extend far beyond their current boundaries.

Currently, the tallest mountain in Israel is Mount Hermon, which is slightly less than 10,000 feet. However, it shall be made low, along with all the other mountains in Israel. The tallest mountain in Israel will be Mount Zion, the mountain of the Lord. There will also be rivers and streams upon every high mountain.

Where there were mountains, there should be plateaus.

There will be rivers and streams upon all the hills and high places.

Israel's cities will be destroyed. Structures can be expected to crumble to the ground; no tall buildings will be left at all. The crooked places in Israel will be made straight. The rough places will become smooth or plain. The valleys will be lifted up and have fountains.

The wilderness in Israel will become like Eden. Waters shall break out. The dry and thirsty lands will have springs and pools of water. Pastures shall spring forth.

There will be joy, gladness, thanksgiving, and a melody in the wilderness or desert.

Where there are now thorns, the fir tree will grow. Where there are now briars, there will be the myrtle tree.

The high trees will be made low, and the low trees will be made high.

The rivers of Judah will flow with water.

Israel will be greatly changed.

* **THE TOWERS FALL**-Isa 30:25

* Israel's **STRONGHOLDS** will be thrown down-Mic 5:11

* Israel's cities, God says, **SO WILL I DESTROY**-Mic 5:14

* **THE CROOKED SHALL BE MADE STRAIGHT**-Isa 40:4

- * **THE CROOKED SHALL BE MADE STRAIGHT**-Lk 3:5
- * **THE ROUGH PLACES** (shall be made) **PLAIN**-Isa 40:4
- * **THE ROUGH WAYS SHALL BE MADE SMOOTH**-Lk 3:5
- * **EVERY VALLEY SHALL BE EXALTED**-Isa 40:4
- * **EVERY VALLEY SHALL BE FILLED**-Lk 3:5
- * **EVERY MOUNTAIN...SHALL BE MADE LOW**-Isa 40:4
- * **EVERY MOUNTAIN AND HILL SHALL BE BROUGHT LOW**-Lk 3:5
- * **FOR THE MOUNTAINS SHALL DEPART**-Isa 54:10
- * **THE MOUNTAINS WERE NOT FOUND**-Rev 16:20
- * **AND THERE SHALL BE UPON EVERY HIGH MOUNTAIN...RIVERS AND STREAMS OF WATERS**-Isa 30:25
- * **EVERY...HILL SHALL BE MADE LOW**-Isa 40:4
- * **THE HILLS BE REMOVED**-Isa 54:10
- * **UPON EVERY HIGH HILL, RIVERS AND STREAMS OF WATERS**-Isa 30:25
- * **I WILL OPEN RIVERS IN HIGH PLACES**-Isa 41:18
- * **I WILL OPEN...FOUNTAINS IN THE MIDST OF THE VALLEYS**-Isa 41:18
- * **I WILL MAKE THE WILDERNESS A POOL OF WATER**-Isa 41:18
- * **FOR IN THE WILDERNESS SHALL WATERS BREAK OUT**-Isa 35:6
- * **I GIVE WATERS IN THE WILDERNESS**-Isa 43:20
- * **ZION...HE WILL MAKE HER WILDERNESS LIKE EDEN**-Isa 51:3
- * **I WILL EVEN MAKE A WAY IN THE WILDERNESS**-Isa 43:19
- * **There will be STREAMS IN THE DESERT**-Isa 35:6
- * **I WILL...MAKE...RIVERS IN THE DESERT**-Isa 43:19
- * **I GIVE...RIVERS IN THE DESERT**-Isa 43:20
- * **ZION...HER DESERT LIKE THE GARDEN OF THE LORD**-Isa 51:3
- * **I WILL MAKE...THE DRY LAND SPRINGS OF WATER**-Isa 41:18
- * **AND THE PARCHED GROUND SHALL BECOME A POOL**-Isa 35:7
- * **THE THIRSTY LAND SPRINGS OF WATER**-Isa 35:7
- * **THE RIVERS OF JUDAH SHALL FLOW**-Joel 3:18
- * **INSTEAD OF THE THORN SHALL COME UP THE FIR TREE**-Isa 55:13
- * **INSTEAD OF THE BRIER SHALL COME UP THE MYRTLE TREE**-Isa 55:13
- * **I THE LORD HAVE BROUGHT DOWN THE HIGH TREE, HAVE EXALTED THE LOW TREE**-Ezek 17:24
- * **IN THE HABITATION OF DRAGONS, WHERE EACH LAY, SHALL BE GRASS WITH REEDS AND RUSHES**-Isa 35:7
- * **ALL THE LAND SHALL BE TURNED AS A PLAIN FROM GEBA TO RIMMON SOUTH OF JERUSALEM**-Zech 14:10
- * **The land SHALL BE LIFTED UP...FROM BENJAMIN'S GATE UNTO THE PLACE OF THE FIRST GATE, UNTO THE CORNER GATE, AND FROM THE TOWER OF HANANEEL UNTO THE KING'S WINEPRESSES**-Zech 14:10

* AND MEN SHALL DWELL IN IT, AND THERE SHALL BE NO MORE UTTER DESTRUCTION; BUT JERUSALEM SHALL BE SAFELY INHABITED-Zech 14:11. The verses continue—

Mt 3:4 (pt 1), ref AND
Mk 1:6 (pt 1)

Mt 3:4 (pt 1), ref Mk 1:6 (pt 1). AND

Mt 3:4 (pt 2). THE SAME

Mt 3:4 (pt 2). THE SAME

Mt 3:4 (pt 3), ref JOHN (WORE CLOTHES) OF CAMEL'S
Mk 1:6 (pt 2). HAIR, AND A (LEATHER BELT) ABOUT
HIS (WAIST); AND HIS (FOOD) WAS
LOCUSTS AND WILD HONEY.

Mt 3:4 (pt 3), ref Mk 1:6 (pt 2). **JOHN (WORE CLOTHES) OF CAMEL'S HAIR, AND A GIRDLE (or LEATHER BELT) ABOUT HIS (WAIST).** Elijah is mentioned in 2 Ki 1:8 as being GIRT WITH A GIRDLE OF LEATHER ABOUT HIS LOINS. The Scriptures tell us that Elijah will come before the great and dreadful day of the Lord which is Armageddon. Wearing a rough garment was symbolic of being a prophet-ref Zech 13:4. The verses continue—

AND HIS (FOOD) WAS LOCUSTS AND WILD HONEY. Would any that are reading or hearing this obey God and eat locusts and wild honey and live as John the Baptist did? There appears to have been no pride, but only humility in John, yet he was sent to announce the coming of God-the Messiah. His life was an example of *denying self* as it is written in Lk 9:23-AND HE SAID TO THEM ALL, IF ANY MAN WILL COME AFTER ME, LET HIM DENY HIMSELF, AND TAKE UP HIS CROSS DAILY, AND FOLLOW ME, ref Mt 16:24; Mk 8:34. He conformed to the ways of God. It is reported that locusts and wild honey was a common diet in the region that John was in. It was a diet for the poorest of people. Locusts are mentioned in Lev 11:22 as foods that could be eaten that were clean. John had no worldly aspirations. He was not seeking for worldly fun, conveniences, possessions, or relationships. His priority was to do the work which God had sent him to do out of a pure heart. His food, clothing and manner of life sent a clear message to a covetous, pleasure seeking people.

There are few today that preach as John did. Those few that do are ridiculed. Many of the major denominations try to discredit them. Many radio and television stations and networks, even Christian ones will not carry their preaching.

John came as a humble servant. He did not dress in nice clothing. He ate things as the poorest people might eat, yet the religious leaders and rulers heard him, but ridiculed him.

John the Baptist, the one anointed to prepare the way of God on this earth, did not come with great pomp, but came as a humble servant. In the eyes of God he was great but in the eyes of man he was something to be mocked, ridiculed, and then killed.

Today's churches often seek to lift and exalt people. John came to humble them.

The lower we become the more prepared we will be when Jesus returns.

DENY SELF BIBLE STUDY

1 Tim 1:16; Heb 12:1-4; Mt 16:24; Mk 8:34; Lk 14:33; 2 Cor 5:15; Num 15:39; 2 Tim 2:21; Titus 2:12; 1 Jn 2:6; Ro 8:29; 1 Jn 4:17; 2 Cor 10:3,5; Jn 3:30; Lk 9:24; Mt 19:21; Mt 8:20; Lk 13:33; Lk 14:26,27; Lk 14:33; Mt 6:19-21; Lk 16:13; Acts 20:17-24; Ro 12:1,2; 1 Cor 7:23; Ro 15:1-3. Illustrations of denying self-Lk 1:80; Mk 1:6; Mk 2:14; Mk 8:35-38; Mt 19:27; Lk 8:58; Mk 10:17-25; Mt 19:27-29; Mk 10:28-30; Lk 12:22,31; Lk 18:28-30; Acts 4:32-37; Phil 3:8.

The verses continue—

Mk 1:5 (pt 1). AND

Mk 1:5 (pt 1). AND

Mt 3:5 (pt 1). THEN

Mt 3:5 (pt 1). THEN

Mk 1:5 (pt 2). THERE

Mk 1:5 (pt 2). THERE

Mt 3:5 (pt 2), ref WENT OUT TO HIM
Mk 1:5 (pt 3).

Mt 3:5 (pt 2), ref Mk 1:5 (pt 3). WENT OUT TO HIM

Mt 3:5 (pt 4), ref ALL
Mk 1:5 (pt 4).

Mt 3:5 (pt 4), ref Mk 1:5 (pt 4). **ALL.** The word *all* that is used in this and sometimes other verses may best be summarized, as is written by an excellent scholar—the word "*all*" brings out the...imperfect tense used in Greek. It could be

Mk 1:5 (pt 5). THE (COUNTRYSIDE) OF
Mt 3:5 (pt 5), ref (JUDEA),
Mk 1:5 (pt 6).
Mk 1:5 (pt 7), ref AND (THE PEOPLE) OF JERUSALEM,
Mt 3:5 (pt 3).
Mt 3:5 (pt 6). AND ALL THE (whole) REGION (or district)
 (AROUND) (the) JORDAN,

Mt 3:6, ref Mk AND WERE (being) BAPTIZED (or
1:5 (pt 8). immersed) (BY) HIM IN (the) JORDAN
 (River), (AS THEY CONFESSED THEIR
 SINS-NASB).

said that people came from all these areas. It is not saying that every person went. It does signify a large number. The verses continue—

Mk 1:5 (pt 5). THE (COUNTRYSIDE) OF

Mt 3:5 (pt 5), ref Mk 1:5 (pt 6). (JUDEA),

Mk 1:5 (pt 7). AND (THE PEOPLE) OF JERUSALEM,

Mt 3:5 (pt 6). AND ALL THE (whole) REGION (or district) (AROUND) (the) JORDAN. God sent the people to John. John was making an impact. Note the order that is given of the people coming to John. The people kept coming and coming. Multitudes of people did believe John the Baptist was a profit from God-ref Mt 21:26.

CHURCHES TODAY
TODAY'S CHURCH

Note—In India as well as Africa, some people are willing to travel miles each day on foot and hundreds of miles by other means to hear preaching such as John the Baptist did.

In Europe, the United States, Canada, and other industrialized areas where a high standard of living exists, most people are not willing to humble themselves. They are not willing to walk across the street to hear this type of teaching. They are not even willing to turn on their television to listen, even when it is brought to them in their house. Most want to be entertained, not convicted of their sins and ungodly lifestyle. Most are into self interest, not following Jesus.

Yet the people in Judea came from long distances, mostly by foot, to the wilderness to hear the teaching of John the Baptist. Some humbled themselves, shared his reproach, repented, and got baptized. Some came for other reasons such as mocking, accusing and disputing. Those called of God will go out, leaving the hustle, the pressures and tensions of this life to seek the real milk of the Word with a soft heart. They will be still, listen, and examine themselves by God's Word.

Yet then, as today, as one travels forward in time, perhaps a year or more, few of those people have continued steadfast in the Word. Few are growing in faith and knowledge as witnessed by their fruits-ref Mt 7:13,14, 20-23; Gal 3:1-4. They became forgetful hearers-Ja 1:25. They have a wayside, stony, or thorny heart. They fall away-ref Lk 8:13. Many do the works of God and look holy when they go to church. Then they go home, act like the devil, and justify themselves.

Today, the large, beautiful, comfortable, air conditioned, churches in America and other places with their elegant choirs, superb entertainment, soft seats, and nice, relaxed, non-convicting type of teaching, certainly attract people. People want to be made to feel good about themselves and be comforted. They do not want to be condemned and admonished because of their sin and the way they act.

These churches usually produce few converts that can stand against the schemes of the devil. This is a far cry from the uncomfortable, barren, wilderness where John called the sinners exactly what they were—vipers, and spoke of the wrath to come, and fire. The area in which John preached is below sea level. It may also have been hot. The verses continue—

Mt 3:6, ref Mk 1:5 (pt 8). AND WERE (being) BAPTIZED (or immerse, to submerge, or dip completely under. The verses continue—

(BY) HIM. First repentance was preached, and then those that were willing to admit and repent of their sins, were baptized by John the Baptist. The verses continue—

IN (the) JORDAN (River). Ro 6:4 and Col 2:12 came after the resurrection of Christ, but nevertheless clearly shows that water baptism is not by sprinkling. It is written: BURIED WITH HIM IN BAPTISM (or buried in the water) INTO DEATH. Christian baptism—after the death and resurrection of Christ as well as John's baptism is and was by full immersion. Sprinkling and infant baptism are counterfeits—in essence they are no baptisms at all. Man and religion (especially Catholicism) has turned the right way into a counterfeit way which is no way. Water baptism today is reserved for those that have placed their trust in Jesus Christ as their only hope of salvation. A baby cannot do this. The verses continue—

(AS THEY CONFESSED THEIR SINS-NASB). Note, a public confession of their sins went hand in hand with baptism

which was a result of repentance. The confession was more than publicly admitting the guilt of their sins under conviction from God, it was a childlike willingness from the heart to turn from sin by the power of God. The people were repenting and looking forward to coming of the Christ. Pride needs to be repented of and destroyed in the life of a true born again Christian. People that wish to follow Christ, need to humble themselves, face the difficulty of self examination by the Word of God, and then confession. It is a humbling experience to openly confess ones sins before many people. Pride, self will, and being concerned about what people will think will seldom do this. True repentance, will. A baby cannot confess their sins.

The doctrine of REPENTANCE, open confession, and humiliation is something people do not want to hear in this generation. Perhaps that is one reason why there are so few real conversions. Most people that claim they are a Christian and believe they are going to heaven, are not known by Christ. When humility is absent, so is salvation. Being wise in ones eyes, self centered, or conceited, is the pathway to hell. There will be no conceit and pride in hell-ref Isa 14:15-17. By a person confessing that they are guilty of sin and worthy of death, they become pardoned and receive life by the grace and mercy of God. Jesus came to call sinners to repentance, not the righteous. For more on “repentance” see Mt 3:8; 3:11 (pt 2); Lk 3:3 (pt 2); Lk 3:18; Jn 3:18.

Note-Those people that read this, that attend a church that does infant baptism and or sprinkling baptism, it is suggested that you depart from that church and find one that understands the Scriptures more clearly. If they do not, they may be found to be a follower of the blind which lead the blind. This also includes those that baptize in the name of Jesus (which symbolizes that they do not believe one God which is manifested in the three persons of the Trinity).

WARNING TO THE PHARISEES

29½ TO 30 YEARS AFTER JESUS’ BIRTH

Mt 3:7 (pt 1).

BUT WHEN HE SAW MANY OF THE PHARISEES AND SADDUCEES COME TO HIS BAPTISM (or coming to where he was baptizing-NIV, or coming to be immersed by him-JNT),

Mt 3:7 (pt 1). BUT WHEN HE SAW MANY OF THE PHARISEES AND SADDUCEES COME TO HIS BAPTISM (or coming to where he was baptizing-NIV, or coming to be immersed by him-JNT).

PHARISEES

It is reported that the religious group, (or what we today might call the denomination of the Pharisees) originated about 130 years before Christ was born. It has been estimated by one authority that they numbered about 6000. It is reported that their name meant “separated ones”. They sat in Moses’ seat-ref Mt 23:2. They were unsaved, hypocritical religious leaders during the time of Jesus. They tried to follow the Mosaic law exactly, however their understanding of the law was often flawed. They instigated many of their own laws and traditions which were contrary to good sound teaching, and which made God’s Word of none effect-ref Mt 23:13-35; Mk 7:13. They taught for doctrines the commandments of men-ref Mt 15:9. Many of them did not think of themselves as sinners-ref Lk 18:10,11. In Judaism, the Pharisees were very influential. Nearly all people thought of them as very Godly-Lk 11:44. They loved the chief seats in the synagogues, greetings in the markets, and to be called Rabbi, Rabbi-ref Mt 23:6,7. They honored God with their words, but in vain, they worshipped Him. Their hearts were far from Him-ref Mt 15:8,9. They were far from God. They were blind leaders of the blind-ref Mt 15:13,14. They were envious of Jesus-ref Mt 27:18 and Mk 15:10. They were enemies of Christ. These orthodox men often ridiculed, and tried to discredit the teachings of Jesus openly. They even went so far as to say of Jesus that he cast out devils by Beelzebub the prince of the devils and that He had an unclean spirit-ref Mt 12:24; Mk 3:30. Some were so evil that they committed the unforgivable sin and thus had no possible hope of ever being saved-ref Mk 3:28-30. They thought and feared that if they left him alone that all men would come to believe on Him and the Romans would come and take away their nation-ref Jn 11:48. What a shock if must have been to them as John told them to repent.

They rejected God’s message spoken through John-ref Lk 7:30. They, as well as the people—questioned, mocked, and accused both John and later Jesus of many things. Many did not believe John. Some even accused John of having a devil-ref Mt 11:18; 21:32.

They were so hard and evil, that even though they knew and admitted Jesus had done many miracles, they knew he raised the dead-ref Jn 11:44-47, and they knew He was of God, yet they hated Him-ref Jn 3:2 and 11:47. They were so evil that they even wanted to kill Lazarus whom Jesus had raised from the dead-ref Jn 12:10. Later, they knew that God raised Jesus from the dead, yet they still tried to stop those preaching in His name-ref Mt 28:11-13 and Acts 3:12-17, 4:1-18.

There are many such, righteous and holy looking, but spiritually blind, religious leaders in today’s churches also. There are multitudes of spiritually blind people that think both their religious leaders and themselves are of God but they will

eternally perish, as it is written-ref 2 Cor 11:13-15.

SADDUCEES

The religious group of the Sadducees were those that said there is NO RESURRECTION, NEITHER ANGEL, NOR SPIRIT-Acts 23:8, ref Mt 22:23. It has been said that these were anti-religious. They did not believe that the dead would rise. The two groups (the Pharisees and Sadducees) believed differently and were adversaries, yet they joined together in their opposition to Jesus Christ. John's impact was so great that even many of these religious leaders came. What a shock it must have been to them as John by the direction of the Holy Spirit also told them to repent, yet they would not. Jesus (Who is God) showed them clearly through the Scriptures that they did greatly err-ref Mk 12:27, that they did not know (or understand) the Scriptures, neither the power of God-ref Mk 12:24. When Jesus had finished correcting the Sadducees the people were astonished. Even the Pharisees heard or admitted that Jesus had effectively showed the Sadducees that they were wrong. The Sadducees were put to silence-ref Mt 22:34. Yet despite this, did they repent? The answer is no. They continued in the error of their ways.

They now know they were wrong. When people die the first death upon the earth, they go to be with Jesus (if they are born-again), or they go to hell-ref Lk 16:22,23.

It is reported that they seemed to die out after the destruction of Jerusalem in about 70 A.D.

Much of what is called the Christian church of today is as the Pharisees and Sadducees of the days of Jesus. They are set in their deceived ways. They have little true understanding of the Scriptures, yet they do not believe this. Many deceived people follow these blind leaders of the blind and do not understand that they will perish.

FUNERALS

When have you ever heard a preacher or priest today say at a funeral that the dead person was now in hell being tormented. The Scriptures clearly show that this is what happens to most people, yet much of today's clergy seem to indicate that their people all go to heaven when they die. Many claim to be a Christian, but have little understanding of what it means to be a real, born again Christian as indicated by their converted attitude and their fruits.. They have a knowledge of God in their minds, but He is not in their hearts doing a life changing work in their lives. The verses continue—

Lk 3:7 (pt 1). THEN (*John*)

Lk 3:7 (pt 1). THEN (*John*), that is John the Baptist—

Mt 3:7 (pt 2), ref Lk 3:7 (pt 2). HE SAID

Mt 3:7 (pt 2), ref Lk 3:7 (pt 2). HE SAID

Mt 3:7 (pt 3), ref Lk 3:7 (pt 3). (TO)

Mt 3:7 (pt 3), ref Lk 3:7 (pt 3). (TO)

Mt 3:7 (pt 4). THEM,

Mt 3:7 (pt 4). THEM,

Lk 3:7 (pt 4). THE (CROWDS)

Lk 3:7 (pt 4). THE (CROWDS). John did not preach at the people as most do today. He did not preach about the Bible, or about the law, or about the prophets. He preached directly to their hearts the actual Words of God. This kind of teaching IS QUICK, AND POWERFUL, AND SHARPER THAN ANY TWOEDGED SWORD, PIERCING EVEN TO THE DIVIDING ASUNDER OF SOUL AND SPIRIT, AND OF THE JOINTS AND MARROW, AND IS A DISCERNER OF THE THOUGHTS AND INTENTS OF THE HEART-Heb 4:12. This is the kind of preaching that makes some repent, while some others become hostile. John did not teach to please men, but to please God. Most people in most churches have never heard this kind of teaching. The verse continues—

Lk 3:7 (pt 5). THAT CAME FORTH TO BE BAPTIZED (or immersed) (BY) HIM,

Lk 3:7 (pt 5). THAT CAME FORTH TO BE BAPTIZED (or immersed) (BY) HIM. Note, "crowds" came. There were many people that repented and came to be baptized. The verses continue—

Mt 3:7 (pt 5), O GENERATION (or brood) OF (SNAKES), WHO (HAS) WARNED YOU TO FLEE (or

Mt 3:7 (pt 5), ref Lk 3:7 (pt 6). O GENERATION (or brood) OF (SNAKES). Note, John spoke to them harshly and honestly. His words seem motivated by the fact that he seen the Pharisees and Sadducees coming. He spoke to the crowds

escape) FROM THE WRATH (or punishment) TO COME?

which especially included the Pharisees, Sadducees (that is the religious leaders), but even those that were repenting—he called them snakes. He cut right through their self righteous exterior openly.

Jesus also called the Pharisees serpents, ye generation of vipers-ref Mt 23:33. Jesus went on to say, How can ye escape the damnation of hell?-ref Mt 23:33.

God, through John was also telling Israel exactly what they were and that they need to repent. Regretfully, there is little honest preaching of this kind in the generation we now live. Biblically illiterate people today might say, “God would never speak to people this way. God is love.” Indeed, before people are Biblically saved, it may be said of many that they are a generation of snakes. John said—

WHO (HAS) WARNED YOU TO FLEE (or escape)

FROM THE WRATH (or punishment) TO COME? We escape the wrath to come through repentance and faith in Jesus. From the question that John asked, there also came forth a prophecy. That prophecy was that there was going to be a time of wrath coming.

Within about 40 years, the Roman army did come and destroyed Jerusalem and the nation of Israel.

One may also consider the wrath of God to come during the tribulation period and immediately after the tribulation which is the Battle of Armageddon. Following Armageddon, then there is the judgment when Jesus has returned and sits upon the Throne of His Glory-ref Mt 25:31. The word “wrath” is mentioned about 13 times in the Revelation as pertaining to the tribulation period.

One might consider the wrath of Satan that will come during the tribulation period, as it is written: Rev 12:12-WOE TO THE INHABITERS OF THE EARTH AND OF THE SEA! FOR THE DEVIL IS COME DOWN UNTO YOU, HAVING GREAT WRATH, BECAUSE HE KNOWETH THAT HE HATH BUT A SHORT TIME.

One might consider the final judgment that will come is upon all unrepentant people. We are told to flee, flee from the wrath that is to come—flee to Christ and His mercy. The verses continue—

**Mt 3:8, ref
Lk 3:8 (pt 1).**

BRING FORTH THEREFORE (or produce, or bear) FRUITS (WORTHY) (OF) REPENTANCE (or fruit in keeping with repentance-NASB) (or if you have really turned from your sins to God, produce fruit that will prove it!-JNT):

Mt 3:8, ref Lk 3:8 (pt 1). BRING FORTH THEREFORE (or produce, or bear) FRUITS

(WORTHY). Note, it is written in Lk 21:36-PRAY ALWAYS, THAT YE MAY BE ACCOUNTED WORTHY...TO STAND BEFORE THE SON OF MAN. The verses continue—

(OF) REPENTANCE (or fruit in keeping with repentance-NASB) (or if you have really turned from your sins to God, produce fruit that will prove it!-JNT). In other words, bring forth evidence that is befitting of repentance and that will prove you have truly repented. Repentance is not saying you are sorry and ashamed of your sins, but yet you continue to do them. To try and correct the unrepentant people, and especially the religious leaders was insulting to them, as it is written, THE PHARISEES WERE OFFENDED, AFTER THEY HEARD THIS SAYING-Mt 15:12.

By the fruits each of us display, it can be known if repentance was real or was in word only.

Trees with bad fruit, that is thorns or thistles in their attitude and works, or bear no good fruit are cut down and thrown into the fire.

REPENTANCE

For more on “repentance” see Mt 3:6; 3:11 (pt 2); Lk 3:3 (pt 2); Lk 3:18; Jn 3:18.

(Pg. 122; 124; 125; 126; 135; 148; 267; 280)

For a person to say they are saved, to pretend they are saved, and to try and act and talk like they are saved is not repentance. To turn over a new leaf as some might say is not repentance. Repentance is not a work, but a command that involves the surrender of ones self to God from the heart. It is putting away the willful practice of sin, rebellion, stubbornness, pride, and selfishness (or self-centeredness) from the heart under conviction from the Holy Spirit. Without repentance there can be no salvation. Mt 7:22,23 illustrate that many people do works that look like they are of God, but true enduring Biblical repentance did not take place. They perish. The result of true faith (or trust) in Jesus Christ is being converted, being born-again, being changed, renewed, putting off the old man, and putting on the new man. The proof or evidence of true Biblical faith in Jesus Christ, of being converted, of being born-again, is a changed attitude from the heart and the putting away of the willful practice of sin, including stubbornness and rebellion against God and His Word. A changed life emerges that begins to reflect being conformed to the image of Christ-ref Ro 8:29. Where once there was stubbornness and excuses, now there is a loving, willing heart. There now emerges a childlike, humble attitude to God’s correction. The fruits of the Spirit of God and the works of God that are prompted or produced as a result of faith begin to

come forth. Thus, the judgments are according to works—the evidence of faith. Many say they have faith in Christ, but there is no evidence of true Biblical repentance and trust. As it was just written, **IF YOU HAVE REALLY TURNED FROM YOUR SINS TO GOD, PRODUCE FRUIT THAT WILL PROVE IT!**-Mt 3:8 JNT. (Produce fruit in keeping with repentance-NIV.) Every person that does not bring forth good fruit is cut down and shall perish-ref Mt 7:19. True Biblical baptism by immersion does follow repentance, however, not everyone that does get baptized has Biblically repented. John begins to address what a changed attitude should reflect in some of the verses to follow. Repentance is turning from your sins and faith is turning to God with fruits as evidence. Water baptism was for those that had truly repented. Apart from true repentance from the heart, and genuine trust in the Jesus Christ, water baptism has no meaning. The verses continue—

Mt 3:9 (pt 1). AND THINK NOT

Mt 3:9 (pt 1). AND THINK NOT

Lk 3:8 (pt 2). AND BEGIN NOT

Lk 3:8 (pt 2). AND BEGIN NOT

Mt 3:9 (pt 2), ref Lk 3:8 (pt 3). TO SAY (or think)

Mt 3:9 (pt 2), ref Lk 3:8 (pt 3). TO SAY (or think), or make excuses

Mt 3:9 (pt 3), ref Lk 3:8 (pt 4). WITHIN YOURSELVES (or don't suppose you can comfort yourselves by saying-JNT), WE HAVE ABRAHAM (FOR) OUR FATHER: FOR I (TELL YOU), THAT GOD IS ABLE OF THESE STONES TO RAISE UP CHILDREN (or sons) (TO) ABRAHAM.

Mt 3:9 (pt 3), ref Lk 3:8 (pt 4). WITHIN YOURSELVES (or don't suppose you can comfort yourselves by saying-JNT). In other words, don't even begin to think you are justified and saved. The unrepentant, worldly, and vain heart can find many ways and excuses to make itself believe it is going to heaven. However, there is only one true way—it is through true repentance and trust in the Messiah. God knows our ungodly thoughts and words. God's Word does not profit us if our hearts choose to believe the lying thoughts we have that contradict His ways. Humbleness is needed if one is to follow God.

A person is not to even think or say—

WE HAVE ABRAHAM (FOR) OUR FATHER. These words struck at the very heart of the Jews. Many thought they were saved because they were of the seed of Abraham. They did not understand that it was not through natural descent that they would be saved. They did not understand that it is through belief, trust, or faith in the Lord Jesus Christ that they were really Abraham's seed and heirs of the promise-ref Gal 3:9,29. This is what is accounted for righteousness-ref Gen 15:6. John knew some of the people would justify themselves or make excuses in such a way that they would reject God's message. John warned the people not to even have thoughts that they might be saved because they were descended from Abraham. Salvation is not inherited. Many in this generation also make excuses justifying themselves as to why God will let them in to heaven. Many wrongly think they are saved because their parents were saved, or they are married to a preacher, they sing in the choir, go to a Christian church, or may be of a certain race, or nation, or do good works, or are a good person. Millions trust in their own goodness. Multitudes today do nearly the same thing in saying that they have their own religion, denomination or church. They put their trust in that. John is saying that they should not even begin to think that such things have any bearing regarding being saved. Many try to enter heaven through another way, another Gospel, or a Gospel of self reliance. Many do not want to admit how sinful they are. Some even think they are perfect and sinless. They do not want to repent and change their habits and lifestyles. They do not choose to fear God. They do not want to believe they will perish to hell. John's message here was a warning for people (which may include you) not to believe the wrong thoughts or feelings they had that they were saved. *Salvation has nothing to do with the position or job a person holds (such as a priest, preacher, or rabbi), or with the religion or church a person is part of, or with the good works a person does, or with a person's birth or nationality.* Multitudes in hell felt they were saved, but their feelings were wrong.

In Jn 8:39-56, about 3 years later, the Jews did indeed use the very words that John said not to do when they were talking to Jesus. Jn-8:39 **THEY ANSWERED AND SAID...ABRAHAM IS OUR FATHER.** The verses continue—

FOR I (TELL YOU), THAT GOD IS ABLE OF THESE STONES. While the people might have thought John was referring to the stones on the ground, God is able to humble and soften even hearts of stone to have childlike faith in Him. Many Jews had hearts like stones. Jesus referred to stones in Lk 19:40.

This may have also been a reference that Gentiles would also be saved-ref Acts 11:18. The verses continue—

TO RAISE UP CHILDREN (or sons) (TO) ABRAHAM. THESE THINGS WERE DONE IN BETHABARA BEYOND JORDAN-Jn 1:28. It is reported that this is the same area that the twelve stones were taken out of the Jordan when Joshua pitched in Gilgal, in the east of the border of Jericho-ref Jos 4:20.

It has been said that when God raised up the Gentile church that He was raising up stones to become children to Abraham.

Only God is able to bring about the new birth. Being the offspring of Abraham saves no one. Through the new birth (or being born-again), a person becomes a child of Abraham. The Bible is showing it is one thing regarding being the offspring of someone, but it is something different being a submissive, obedient child. It could be said that John is saying, stop making excuses and put away wrong thinking.

The kind of teaching that John the Baptist did would often make people either angry or broken through conviction of the Holy Spirit. This kind of preaching cuts away the excuses, the pretense, the trying to appear to be something that one is not.

This kind of preaching is seldom heard in today's churches, **FOR THE WORD OF GOD IS QUICK, AND POWERFUL, AND SHARPER THAN ANY TWOEDGED SWORD, PIERCING EVEN TO THE DIVIDING ASUNDER OF SOUL AND SPIRIT, AND OF THE JOINTS AND MARROW, AND IS A DISCERNER OF THE THOUGHTS AND INTENTS OF THE HEART-Heb 4:12.**

When attending one of those rare, good Bible teaching churches, a person may believe that someone has told the preacher all about them. They get angry or become broken, depending on their heart, as their inner self is revealed. What really happened was the Holy Spirit put in the mind of the preacher what to say and then brought the person under conviction for their wrongdoing.

Mt 3:10 (ref Lk 3:9). AND NOW (ALREADY) THE AXE IS LAID (TO) THE ROOT OF THE TREES (ready to strike): THEREFORE EVERY TREE WHICH (DOES NOT BEAR) (or produce) GOOD FRUIT IS (CUT) (or chopped) DOWN, AND (THROWN) INTO THE FIRE.

Mt 3:10 (ref Lk 3:9). AND NOW (ALREADY) THE AXE IS LAID (TO) THE ROOT. The root is the very foundation. It may be said the root is the feet, the heart, the soul, or even the life. When the root is severed the life is gone. The axe being laid to the root is a message of judgment. The verses continue

OF THE TREES (ready to strike). Trees (which is plural) here represent people. A person seldom knows when the axe will strike. An axe, which signifies eternal destruction, is at the feet, heart, life, or soul of a person ready to strike, as well as the nation. It can also represent Israel. The verse continue—

THEREFORE EVERY TREE or person—
WHICH (DOES NOT BEAR) (or produce) GOOD FRUIT. Any person that does not repent and does not have a changed attitude reflecting the fruits of the Spirit (good fruit) and the works prompted by God. The verses continue—

IS (CUT) (or chopped) DOWN. The person that does not bear good fruit is chopped down. They are judged guilty (for all have sinned and come short of the glory of God.). The verses continue—

AND (THROWN) INTO THE FIRE. The unsaved will be chopped down and cast into the fire. No matter how good and green the tree looks, if it does not bring forth good fruit, it will be thrown into the fire. No matter how good and clean the cup and platter looks on the outside, if it is not clean on the inside, it will be destroyed-ref Mt 23:25,26; Lk 11:39. No matter how good and righteous a person looks on the outside, if the person has not repented and does not bring forth the fruits (or attitude) and works of the Spirit of God, they will perish.

Jesus spoke almost the exact same words about 16 months later. Mt 7:19,20-**EVERY TREE THAT BRINGETH NOT FORTH GOOD FRUIT IS HEWN DOWN, AND CAST INTO THE FIRE. WHEREFORE BY THEIR FRUITS YE SHALL KNOW THEM.** By the evidence of what a person does and their attitude you shall know if they are of God or not.

The only true good trees are those that admit they are bad, confess, and repent of their sins, and then trust in the finished work of Jesus as their only hope of escaping the axe. Thus His righteousness is imputed to us-ref Ro 4:22-25; Ja 3:23. Only a good, or good and honest heart can admit it is **DECEITFUL ABOVE ALL THINGS, AND DESPERATELY WICKED: WHO CAN KNOW IT?-Jere 17:9.** Few people can admit this. Few people truly repent. Few people in this generation hear this message from their preacher, priest, or rabbi, and few will read the Bible and admit that God is true. **YEA, LET GOD BE TRUE, BUT EVERY MAN A LIAR-Ro 3:4.**

John did not speak respectfully to the religious leaders which were so respected by the people. He boldly showed those that came—their sin. He did not seek to comfort the people with smooth, deceitful words. He came to turn their hearts to God through repentance.

Herod, Pontius Pilate, with the Gentiles, and the people of Israel hung Jesus on the cross. Yet it was people's sin that put Him there and His love for the world that brought Him there.

About 40 to 43 years after this message came forth, Israel was ravaged by the Romans. Perhaps 100,000 Jews died.

TODAY'S PREACHING

What would happen if your preacher taught as John the Baptist, and Jesus taught. It may be that many would run out of

the church in disgust. Yet perhaps a few would remain and truly repent. Others might try to get the preacher removed from the church. The kind of revival churches talk about today is usually no true revival at all. Most people have a good opinion of themselves, and the preaching they hear does little to change this false perception.

Many preachers today preach far more about themselves than about Jesus Christ through the pure Word. Did John the Baptist preach about himself, his parents, relatives, or job? Did he preach from other people's writings or philosophy? Most preachers today have either lost their way, or have never found it-ref Mt 7:13-15; Mt 7:21-23; Rev 3:14-22. PREACH THE WORD-2 Tim 4:2.

HELL AND THE LAKE OF FIRE

It is written Ja 3:6-FIRE OF HELL-Ja 3:6. The rich man said, in Lk 16:24-FATHER ABRAHAM, HAVE MERCY ON ME, AND SEND LAZARUS, THAT HE MAY DIP THE TIP OF HIS FINGER IN WATER, AND COOL MY TONGUE FOR I AM TORMENTED IN THIS FLAME. Jesus said in Mk 9:43-AND IF THY HAND OFFEND THEE, CUT IT OFF: IT IS BETTER FOR THEE TO ENTER INTO LIFE MAIMED, THAN HAVING TWO HANDS TO GO INTO HELL, INTO THE FIRE THAT NEVER SHALL BE QUENCHED.

Hell is a place of consciousness-ref Lk 16:23,24; a place of DARKNESS-Mt 8:12; eternal separation from your loved ones-ref Lk 13:28; not the slightest hope of release-ref Mt 25:46. There is the torment of memory in hell. You may remember every single chance you had to repent, yet you refused-ref Lk 16:27,28.

It is written, WHOSOEVER WAS NOT FOUND WRITTEN IN THE BOOK OF LIFE WAS CAST INTO THE LAKE OF FIRE-Rev 20:15; HELL FIRE-Mt 18:9; Mk 9:47; DEVOURING FIRE-Isa 33:14; EVERLASTING FIRE-Mt 25:41; a FIRE THAT NEVER SHALL BE QUENCHED-Mk 9:43; THE LAKE OF FIRE AND BRIMSTONE-Rev 20:10; COALS OF FIRE-Pv 25:22; UNQUENCHABLE FIRE-Mt 3:12; FURNACE OF FIRE-Mt 13:42; VENGEANCE OF ETERNAL FIRE-Jude 7; RAGING FIRE THAT WILL CONSUME THE ENEMIES OF GOD-Heb 10:27 NIV; TORMENTED WITH FIRE AND BRIMSTONE-Rev 14:10; ETERNAL JUDGMENT-Heb 6:2; EVERLASTING BURNINGS-Isa 33:14; EVERLASTING CONTEMPT-Dan 12:2; EVERLASTING PUNISHMENT-Mt 25:46; EVERLASTING DESTRUCTION-2 Thes 1:9; TORMENTED DAY AND NIGHT FOR EVER AND EVER-Rev 20:10; THEY ARE BURNED-Jn 15:6; WHERE THEIR WORM DIETH NOT, AND THE FIRE IS NOT QUENCHED-Mk 9:46; THE SMOKE OF THEIR TORMENT ASCENDETH UP FOR EVER AND EVER: AND THEY HAVE NO REST DAY NOR NIGHT-Rev 14:11; SHAME-Dan 12:2; PAINS OF HELL-Ps 116:3; OUTER DARKNESS-Mt 8:12; WEEPING AND GNASHING OF TEETH-Mt 8:12; WAILING AND GNASHING OF TEETH-Mt 13:42; HE LIFT UP HIS EYES, BEING IN TORMENTS-Lk 16:23; AND HE CRIED...I AM TORMENTED IN THIS FLAME-Lk 16:24; HAVE MERCY ON ME-Lk 16:24. This is the eternal destiny of most people. The verses continue—

Lk 3:10. AND THE (CROWD) ASKED HIM, SAYING, WHAT SHALL WE DO THEN?

Lk 3:10. AND THE (CROWD) ASKED HIM, SAYING, WHAT SHALL WE DO THEN? Those in the crowd that had a soft heart toward God's Word wanted to know what they had to do to be saved. They wanted to know what evidence was needed to demonstrate they had repented. In this generation, many might tell a person, just say a sinner's prayer, and you will be eternally saved. Others might say, just believe on Jesus, and you are eternally saved. This is not what John the Baptist said.

PEOPLE ASK JOHN,
“WHAT SHALL WE DO?”
29½ TO 30 YEARS

Lk 3:11. HE (ANSWERED) AND (SAID) (TO) THEM, HE THAT (HAS) TWO COATS, LET HIM (SHARE WITH) HIM THAT (HAS) NONE; AND HE THAT (HAS) (FOOD), LET HIM DO (THE SAME).

Lk 3:11. HE (ANSWERED) AND (SAID) (TO) THEM, HE THAT (HAS) TWO COATS, LET HIM (SHARE WITH) HIM THAT (HAS) NONE; AND HE THAT (HAS) (FOOD), LET HIM DO (THE SAME). John did not say give both your coats, or give all your food, but rather if you have two, give one to the person that has none. John gave them two things to do. He was showing the results or fruits of having a right attitude. John was telling them to do something that would be difficult for them to do unless they repented and had a good heart. He was showing what the attitude of a person that is truly saved should be like. Undoubtedly there were some in the crowd that when they heard this would say to themselves, "I will never give one of my coats away or I will not share my food with anyone, even if they have a need." While others would humbly say yes, they would. We might say he was showing them what a Christ like attitude should be. He was also saying the right attitude

was—don't lay up treasures on earth, but rather in heaven. He was saying to give, be generous, and be kind to those that had a need. Good works do not produce salvation, but repentance and faith in Christ will produce these fruits.

Lk 3:12. THEN CAME ALSO (some) (TAX COLLECTORS) TO BE BAPTIZED (or immersed), AND SAID (TO) HIM, MASTER (or Teacher, or Rabbi), WHAT SHALL WE DO?

Lk 3:12. THEN CAME ALSO (some) (TAX COLLECTORS) TO BE BAPTIZED (or immersed). Tax collectors are often detested by the people. Yet they also came to be baptized. The verse continues—
AND SAID (TO) HIM, MASTER (or Teacher, or Rabbi), WHAT SHALL WE DO? Again, John did not say to them to just say a sinner's prayer or just believe on Jesus which was to come shortly, and you will be eternally saved.

Lk 3:13. AND HE SAID (TO) THEM, (COLLECT) NO MORE THAN THAT WHICH IS APPOINTED YOU (or no more than the government assesses-NIV).

Lk 3:13. AND HE SAID (TO) THEM, (COLLECT) NO MORE THAN THAT WHICH IS APPOINTED YOU (or no more than the government assesses-NIV). John is telling them what may be very difficult for them to do, unless they repented. Tax collectors were and are sometimes very zealous to collect all they can and even more than they should in some instances. Thus, John tells them to do something that would be difficult for a tax collector that did not have a good heart. He was telling them to be honest and do not cheat anyone. He was showing them what a Christ like attitude should be.
The tax collector is to deal justly with both the government as well as with the merchants and people. They are not to abuse their power. They are not to in any way or for any reason charge the people more taxes than are honestly owed. Neither are they to defraud others and take money for themselves.

Lk 3:14. AND (SOME) SOLDIERS LIKEWISE (WERE QUESTIONING) HIM, SAYING, AND WHAT (about us, what) SHALL WE DO? AND HE SAID (TO) THEM, DO VIOLENCE TO NO MAN (or do not take money from anyone by force-NASB, or don't intimidate anyone, or don't extort money), NEITHER ACCUSE ANY FALSELY; AND BE CONTENT (or satisfied) WITH YOUR WAGES.

Lk 3:14. AND (SOME) SOLDIERS. These probably would have been Roman soldiers. Note, the Gentile wise men responded to the birth of Jesus. Now Gentile soldiers appear to be were responding to John's message. The verse continues—
LIKEWISE (WERE QUESTIONING) HIM, SAYING, AND WHAT (about us, what) SHALL WE DO? Soldiers also came to be baptized and wanted to know what they should do. Again, John did not say to them to just say a sinner's prayer or just believe on Jesus which was to come shortly, and you will be eternally saved. Neither did John tell them they could not be saved because they were Gentiles. The verse continues—
AND HE SAID (TO) THEM, DO VIOLENCE TO NO MAN (or do not take money from anyone by force-NASB, or don't intimidate anyone, or don't extort money), NEITHER ACCUSE ANY FALSELY; AND BE CONTENT (or satisfied) WITH YOUR WAGES. Soldiers can sometimes be very violent to people. God forbid, some rape the women, physically hurt and torture others, and kill indiscriminately. Some terrify and oppress innocent people. They may steal money or goods. They may intimidate people and force them to give money. They sometimes will accuse people falsely. They are usually paid a very low wage. Again John tells them to do those things which might be the most difficult for them to do unless they repented. He told them three things to do that would be difficult for a soldier unless they had a good heart. He was showing what the attitude of following Christ should be. In other words, a born-again person should do these things.

John related to them: stop doing violence to men. Do no violence to your relatives, neighbors, or to anyone. Do not use your authority or power in an unjust way. Stop stealing from people by force, stop intimidating people, and stop extorting money, or goods from people.

John further told them not to accuse people falsely, and then lastly—
be content with your wages. This is further covered in Heb 13:3-BE CONTENT WITH SUCH THINGS AS YE HAVE. We might say, do not go on strike. Do not complain about your wages. Learn to live within your means. In reality, those that obey God, God will take care of them and meet their needs as it is also written in the same verse-I WILL NEVER LEAVE THEE, NOT FORSAKE THEE. Verse 4 states-THE LORD IS MY HELPER.

John did not tell the soldiers to lay down their arms. He did not tell them not to go to war. He did not tell them to desert the army.

ATTITUDE

Lk 3:11 to 14 gives a total of 6 or more things to do. These things do not save a person. They are the results of what a person with a Christ like attitude should do. They are fruits of repentance. They are fruits that should portray that a person is no longer following the ways of this world, but the ways of Christ. As the people heard these things, undoubtedly some that did not have a good heart would say to themselves, “I will not do these things”. Others would humble themselves as a little child and obey God’s Word. Many there are that name the name of Christ, but they have never brought forth fruits that bear witness that they have repented and are following Christ.

It is a rare church indeed, in this generation, that would answer the question today in this manner when someone would say, “WHAT SHALL WE DO THEN?”

To summarize some of what John said: give and be generous to those that have a need.

Be honest and do not cheat anyone. Don’t steal or be greedy.

Don’t be violent. Be gentle. Don’t accuse falsely. Be content with your wages and what you have. Don’t strike and complain.

Three groups of people responded and asked what to do. They were (a) the people, (b) the tax collectors, (c) and the soldiers. Missing from these that asked were the religious leaders such as the Pharisees, scribes, lawyers, Sadducees, and a group called the Herodians. etc.

Though the Scriptures clearly reflect that most preachers, elders, and church members will perish, yet they are not yelling out, “What must I do to be saved?” The blind leaders of the blind are confident they are already saved. Are you among them?

Paul, when he fell on the earth when he was on the road to Damascus, spoke these words, WHAT WILT THOU HAVE ME TO DO—Acts 9:6. The number one recommendation that can be given is this: Humbly and prayerfully—*Study the Bible*. Humble thyself and quit making excuses.

BORN AGAIN. CONVERTED

In Acts chapter 2:37, the people were pricked in their heart and believed on Jesus. The people asked: WHAT SHALL WE DO? Peter said: REPENT (this came first), AND BE BAPTIZED EVERY ONE OF YOU...Acts 2:38.

These verses of Scripture are telling a person what to do to be converted, to be born again for it is written

Mt 18:3-Jesus said...EXCEPT YE BE CONVERTED, AND BECOME AS LITTLE CHILDREN, YE SHALL NOT ENTER INTO THE KINGDOM OF HEAVEN. A person must become childlike, soft, and humbled to correction from God and the Bible.

Jn 3:3-Jesus said...EXCEPT A MAN BE BORN AGAIN, HE CANNOT SEE THE KINGDOM OF GOD.

BE CONTENT: HARD WORK TO SURVIVE

It is written, IN THE SWEAT OF THY FACE (or by the sweat of your brow) SHALT THOU EAT BREAD (or you will eat your food)-Gen 3:19. Before the curse, Adam had the job of working and taking care of the Garden of Eden. This may have been a sweet and rewarding work as the ground brought forth its increase; however, after the curse, the work of Adam was to be much more difficult. As it is written, IN THE SWEAT OF THY FACE SHALT THOU EAT. The Lord God is pronouncing a judgment of, in sweat and hard work, weariness and much labor, you will eat your food. Lamech shows how difficult it was with the curse on the ground, in Gen 5:28,29-LAMECH...BEGAT A SON: AND HE CALLED HIS NAME NOAH, SAYING, THIS SAME SHALL COMFORT US CONCERNING OUR WORK AND TOIL OF OUR HANDS, BECAUSE OF THE GROUND WHICH THE LORD HATH CURSED. Indeed, a difficult life was ahead. It seems men are often complaining about their work and trying to get around this curse, by working less yet making more. It is written, THE EYES OF MEN ARE NEVER SATISFIED-Pv 27:20. Yet we are to BE CONTENT WITH our WAGES-Lk 3:14.

The verses continue—

**JOHN TEACHES ON THE COMING OF
JESUS****29½ TO 30 YEARS**

Lk 3:15. AND AS THE PEOPLE WERE IN (a state of) (great) EXPECTATION (or were waiting expectantly), AND ALL MEN (WERE

Lk 3:15. AND AS THE PEOPLE WERE IN (a state of) (great) EXPECTATION (or were waiting expectantly). Because of the time frame of the prophecies in Daniel 9:24-26, the people were expecting the coming of the Messiah, the Christ, the one that would deliver

WONDERING) IN THEIR HEARTS (ABOUT) JOHN, (as to) WHETHER HE WERE (possibly) THE CHRIST, OR NOT;

them from the rule of the Romans. There are many other Old Testament Scriptures relating to the coming of Messiah. Some include Mic 5:2; Isa 9:6,7; Isa 11:1-9; Mic 4:2,3. Some of these verses can cover both the first and second coming of Christ, while some cover only His return. It was not understood at that time that Christ would come, be crucified, rise from the dead, ascend into heaven, sit at the right hand of God the Father, but then would return sometime after the rebirth of Israel. Following are the Scriptures just mentioned.

Commentary scriptures continue on pg. 142

JESUS. FORECASTS OF JESUS

Dan 9:24-26-(gives the time that Jesus would come the first time). SEVENTY WEEKS ARE DETERMINED UPON THY PEOPLE AND UPON THY HOLY CITY, TO FINISH THE TRANSGRESSION, AND TO MAKE AN END OF SINS, AND TO MAKE RECONCILIATION FOR INIQUITY, AND TO BRING IN EVERLASTING RIGHTEOUSNESS, AND TO SEAL UP THE VISION AND PROPHECY, AND TO ANOINT THE MOST HOLY. KNOW THEREFORE AND UNDERSTAND, THAT FROM THE GOING FORTH OF THE COMMANDMENT TO RESTORE AND TO BUILD JERUSALEM UNTO THE MESSIAH THE PRINCE SHALL BE SEVEN WEEKS, AND THREESCORE AND TWO WEEKS: THE STREET SHALL BE BUILT AGAIN, AND THE WALL, EVEN IN TROUBLOUS TIMES. AND AFTER THREESCORE AND TWO WEEKS SHALL *MESSIAH BE CUT OFF*, BUT NOT FOR HIMSELF: AND THE PEOPLE OF THE PRINCE THAT SHALL COME SHALL DESTROY THE CITY AND THE SANCTUARY (this happened about 70 A.D.); AND THE END THEREOF SHALL BE WITH A FLOOD, AND UNTO THE END OF THE WAR DESOLATIONS ARE DETERMINED.

Mic 5:2 (This is the first coming of Jesus). BUT THOU, BETHLEHEM EPHRATAH, THOUGH THOU BE LITTLE AMONG THE THOUSANDS OF JUDAH, YET OUT OF THEE SHALL HE COME FORTH UNTO ME (This is the second coming of Jesus). THAT IS TO BE RULER IN ISRAEL; WHOSE GOINGS FORTH HAVE BEEN FROM OF OLD, FROM EVERLASTING.

Isa 9:6,7-(This is the first coming of Jesus). FOR UNTO US A CHILD IS BORN, UNTO US A SON IS GIVEN: (This is the second coming of Jesus). AND THE GOVERNMENT SHALL BE UPON HIS SHOULDER: AND HIS NAME SHALL BE CALLED WONDERFUL, COUNSELLOR, THE MIGHTY GOD, THE EVERLASTING FATHER, THE PRINCE OF PEACE. OF THE INCREASE OF HIS GOVERNMENT AND PEACE THERE SHALL BE NO END, UPON THE THRONE OF DAVID, AND UPON HIS KINGDOM, TO ORDER IT, AND TO ESTABLISH IT WITH JUDGMENT AND WITH JUSTICE FROM HENCEFORTH EVEN FOR EVER. THE ZEAL OF THE LORD OF HOSTS WILL PERFORM THIS.

Isa 11:1-9-(This is the first coming of the Lord). AND THERE SHALL COME FORTH A ROD OUT OF THE STEM OF JESSE, AND A BRANCH SHALL GROW OUT OF HIS ROOTS: AND THE SPIRIT OF THE LORD SHALL REST UPON HIM, THE SPIRIT OF WISDOM AND UNDERSTANDING, THE SPIRIT OF COUNSEL AND MIGHT, THE SPIRIT OF KNOWLEDGE AND OF THE FEAR OF THE LORD; AND SHALL MAKE HIM OF QUICK UNDERSTANDING IN THE FEAR OF THE LORD: (This is the second coming of the Lord). AND HE SHALL NOT JUDGE AFTER THE SIGHT OF HIS EYES, NEITHER REPROVE AFTER THE HEARING OF HIS EARS: BUT WITH RIGHTEOUSNESS SHALL HE JUDGE THE POOR, AND REPROVE WITH EQUITY FOR THE MEEK OF THE EARTH: AND HE SHALL SMITE THE EARTH WITH THE ROD OF HIS MOUTH, AND WITH THE BREATH OF HIS LIPS SHALL HE SLAY THE WICKED. AND RIGHTEOUSNESS SHALL BE THE GIRDLE OF HIS LOINS, AND FAITHFULNESS THE GIRDLE OF HIS REINS. THE WOLF ALSO SHALL DWELL WITH THE LAMB, AND THE LEOPARD SHALL LIE DOWN WITH THE KID; AND THE CALF AND THE YOUNG LION AND THE FATLING TOGETHER; AND A LITTLE CHILD SHALL LEAD THEM. AND THE COW AND THE BEAR SHALL FEED; THEIR YOUNG ONES SHALL LIE DOWN TOGETHER: AND THE LION SHALL EAT STRAW LIKE THE OX. AND THE SUCKING CHILD SHALL PLAY ON THE HOLE OF THE ASP, AND THE WEANED CHILD SHALL PUT HIS HAND ON THE COCKATRICE' DEN. THEY SHALL NOT HURT NOR DESTROY IN ALL MY HOLY MOUNTAIN: FOR THE EARTH SHALL BE FULL OF THE KNOWLEDGE OF THE LORD, AS THE WATERS COVER THE SEA.

Mic 4:2,3-(This is the second coming of Jesus). AND MANY NATIONS SHALL COME, AND SAY, COME, AND LET US GO UP TO THE MOUNTAIN OF THE LORD, AND TO THE HOUSE OF THE GOD OF JACOB; AND HE WILL TEACH US OF HIS WAYS, AND WE WILL WALK IN HIS PATHS: FOR THE LAW SHALL GO FORTH OF ZION, AND THE WORD OF THE LORD FROM JERUSALEM. AND HE SHALL JUDGE AMONG MANY PEOPLE, AND REBUKE STRONG NATIONS AFAR OFF; AND THEY SHALL BEAT THEIR SWORDS INTO PLOWSHARES,

AND THEIR SPEARS INTO PRUNINGHOOKS: NATION SHALL NOT LIFT UP A SWORD AGAINST NATION, NEITHER SHALL THEY LEARN WAR ANY MORE.

The verse continues—

**AND ALL MEN (WERE WONDERING)
IN THEIR HEARTS (ABOUT) JOHN,**

(as to) **WHETHER HE WERE (possibly) THE CHRIST, OR NOT.** There are almost no Scriptures covering the period of approximately 397 B.C. to 6 B.C. If there were any prophets during this time, it is not known. Anna-ref Lk 2:36, is mentioned shortly after the birth of Jesus. Then John the Baptist appears and the people were wondering if he could be the Christ.

Should they have understood the Scriptures they would have known John was not the Christ. The Christ had to be born of a virgin in Bethlehem. He had to be from the lineage of David and be of the tribe of Judah. Someone had to come before the Messiah (the Christ) to prepare the people.

Lk 3:16 (pt 1). JOHN ANSWERED,

Lk 3:16 (pt 1). JOHN ANSWERED,

Mk 1:7 (pt 1). AND PREACHED,

Mk 1:7 (pt 1). AND PREACHED. Note that John preached. The verse continues—

**Mk 1:7 (pt 2), ref
Lk 3:16 (pt 2).** SAYING,

Mk 1:7 (pt 2), ref Lk 3:16 (pt 2). SAYING,

Lk 3:16 (pt 3). (TO) THEM ALL,

Lk 3:16 (pt 3). (TO) THEM ALL,

**Mk 1:8 (pt 1), ref
Mt 3:11 (pt 1),
Lk 3:16 (pt 4).** I INDEED HAVE BAPTIZED (or immersed)
YOU WITH WATER:

Mk 1:8 (pt 1), ref Mt 3:11 (pt 1), Lk 3:16 (pt 4). I INDEED HAVE BAPTIZED (or immersed) YOU WITH WATER. Three baptisms are mentioned in Mt 3:11.

1-Water baptism unto repentance

2-Being baptized with the Holy Ghost

3-Being baptized with fire

Those that gladly received John's Words did repent, did confess their sins, and did get baptized by full immersion.

The verse continues—

Mt 3:11 (pt 2). (FOR) REPENTANCE (or so that you might
turn from sin to God-JNT):

Mt 3:11 (pt 2). (FOR) REPENTANCE (or so that you might turn from sin to God-JNT). John did not hesitate to preach repentance. However, many so called preachers in these latter days never mention this word. Note that both baptism and repentance are connected in this verse. Acts 2:38 also connects the two as it is written in-REPENT AND BE BAPTIZED EVERYONE. In being baptized with the baptism of John (or baptism as a result of repentance), the people were confessing that they deserved death because of sin.

Indeed, all are under the sentence of death for sin. All have come short of the glory of God-ref Ro 3:23. Yet if a person will place their unwavering faith and trust in Christ as it is written, they will pass from the second death to life eternal. For more on "repentance" see Mt 3:6; 3:8; Lk 3:3 (pt 2); Lk 3:18; Jn 3:18.

The verse continues—

**Mt 3:11 (pt 3),
ref Lk 3:16 (pt
5).** BUT

Mt 3:11 (pt 3), ref Lk 3:16 (pt 5). BUT

**Mt 3:11 (pt 4),
ref Mk 1:7 (pt 3),
Lk 3:16 (pt 6).** (THE ONE) THAT (IS COMING) AFTER ME
IS MIGHTIER (or more powerful) THAN I,

Mt 3:11 (pt 4), ref Mk 1:7 (pt 3), Lk 3:16 (pt 6). (THE ONE) THAT (IS COMING) AFTER ME, John is talking about the coming of Christ. These words mirrored the words of Mal 3:1 and the two last verses of the Old Testament-Mal 4:5,6. The verses continue—

IS MIGHTIER (or more powerful) THAN I. Again, the one that is MIGHTIER than John is the long awaited Messiah, the Christ. These words reflect that the coming of the Messiah would be soon. They reflect John's purpose. He was to prepare the way of the Lord

Mt 3:11 (pt 5). WHOSE SHOES (or sandals) I AM NOT WORTHY (or fit) TO BEAR (or carry)

Mt 3:11 (pt 5). WHOSE SHOES (or sandals) I AM NOT WORTHY (or fit) TO BEAR (or carry). John only spoke of himself in the context that he was nothing compared to Christ. The attitude of John the Baptist was that of humility and unworthiness in comparison with the Christ. It was an attitude of the lowest of slaves or servants. This is a much different attitude than what is taught in many churches today.

**SELF
ATTITUDE**

In many churches today “self” is exalted contrary to God’s Word. It is written Mt 23:12-AND WHOSOEVER SHALL EXALT HIMSELF SHALL BE ABASED; AND HE THAT SHALL HUMBLE HIMSELF SHALL BE EXALTED. Lk 18:10-14-TWO MEN WENT UP INTO THE TEMPLE TO PRAY; THE ONE A PHARISEE, AND THE OTHER A PUBLICAN. THE PHARISEE STOOD AND PRAYED THUS WITH HIMSELF, GOD, I THANK THEE, THAT I AM NOT AS OTHER MEN ARE, EXTORTIONERS, UNJUST, ADULTERERS, OR EVEN AS THIS PUBLICAN. I FAST TWICE IN THE WEEK, I GIVE TITHES OF ALL THAT I POSSESS. AND THE PUBLICAN, STANDING AFAR OFF, WOULD NOT LIFT UP SO MUCH AS HIS EYES UNTO HEAVEN, BUT SMOTE UPON HIS BREAST, SAYING, GOD BE MERCIFUL TO ME A SINNER. I TELL YOU, THIS MAN WENT DOWN TO HIS HOUSE JUSTIFIED RATHER THAN THE OTHER. Those that would be raised up high, must begin low.

PREACH THE WORD

Pure God centered preaching is to preach His Word and good sound doctrine. If explanations are needed then use more of God’s Word. This is the good milk which is loved by the few that are called and chosen by God. This preaching pleases God, but does not please most people.

Man’s preaching takes a smidgen of God’s Word and mixes it with lots of worldly stories: of things, of people, of the preacher, of his family, and his personal adventures. Some even mix in a few good jokes and lots of foolishness. Good sound doctrine is often avoided. This watered down, lukewarm preaching is pleasing to most people that want to live in sin. It is not pleasing to the few that are called and chosen by God.

The verse continues—

Mk 1:7 (pt 4), ref Lk 3:16 (pt 7). THE

Mk 1:7 (pt 4), ref Lk 3:16 (pt 7). THE

Lk 3:16 (pt 8). (SANDAL)

Lk 3:16 (pt 8). (SANDAL)

Mk 1:7 (pt 5), ref Lk 3:16 (pt 9). (STRAP) OF WHOSE (SANDALS) I AM NOT WORTHY TO

Mk 1:7 (pt 5), ref Lk 3:16 (pt 9). (STRAP) OF WHOSE (SANDALS) I AM NOT WORTHY TO

Mk 1:7 (pt 6). (even) STOOP DOWN AND

Mk 1:7 (pt 6). (even) STOOP DOWN AND

Mk 1:7 (pt 7) ref Lk 3:16 (pt 10). (UNTIE).

Mk 1:7 (pt 7) ref Lk 3:16 (pt 10). (UNTIE). Again, John the Baptist was very humble. For a slave to bear or untie the strap of his master’s shoes was the smallest of tasks, yet John was saying he was not even worthy to do this for the one that was coming—the Christ. This is the attitude all born again Christians should have. Jesus said regarding John the Baptist in Mt 11:11-AMONG THEM THAT ARE BORN OF WOMEN THERE HATH NOT RISEN A GREATER THAN JOHN THE BAPTIST. Yet John himself indicated that he was not worthy to carry the sandals of or to even untie the sandal strap of the Christ. There seems to be little fear of God or even reverencing God in today’s churches or among “so called” born again Christians. It is written Ja 4:6-GOD RESISTETH THE PROUD, BUT GIVETH GRACE UNTO THE HUMBLE. A little child is humble before his father. The childlike, meek, and humble person will usually respond to Christ. The rich and famous, those filled with self and pride, and those seeking the praise of men usually will not. As should be noted further on, the tares or chaff (those that exalt themselves) shall be burnt up and perish. The wheat (those that humble themselves) shall be gathered into His barn-ref Mt 13:30.

HUMILITY

See the previous verses relating to John the Baptist as an example of the way a born again Christian ought to be. Note that it is written about Jesus in Phil 2:7,8-BUT MADE HIMSELF OF NO REPUTATION, AND TOOK UPON HIM THE *FORM OF A SERVANT*, AND WAS MADE IN THE LIKENESS OF MEN: AND BEING FOUND IN FASHION AS A MAN, *HE HUMBLED HIMSELF, AND BECAME OBEDIENT UNTO DEATH, EVEN THE DEATH OF THE CROSS.*

As this Bible study continues there are many examples of the Christ like (born-again) attitude true Christians should have, but few people that name the name of Christ do. The verse continues—

Mk 1:8 (pt 2). BUT

Mk 1:8 (pt 2). BUT

Mt 3:11 (pt 6), HE SHALL BAPTIZE (or immerse) YOU
Mk 1:8 (pt 3), ref WITH THE HOLY GHOST,
Lk 3:16 (pt 11).

Mt 3:11 (pt 6), Mk 1:8 (pt 3), ref Lk 3:16 (pt 11). HE (this is talking about the Christ that was soon to appear), HE—
SHALL BAPTIZE (or immerse) YOU
WITH THE HOLY GHOST. The word *baptize* when used in connection with water meant to submerge as being buried in the water.

The word *baptize* when used in connection with the Holy Ghost has had three interpretations.

1-This prophecy was fulfilled in Jn 20:22 as it is written: HE BREATHED ON THEM, AND SAITH...RECEIVE YE THE HOLY GHOST. He also opened their minds to understand the Scriptures-ref Lk 24:45. This prophecy was fulfilled the day of His resurrection. Once the Holy Ghost was given, from then on all that belong to Christ receive the indwelling of the Holy Ghost as it is written, Ro 8:9-NOW IF ANY MAN HAVE NOT THE SPIRIT OF CHRIST, HE IS NONE OF HIS, ref 1 Cor 12:13. Isaiah had prophesied in 44:3-I WILL POUR MY SPIRIT UPON THY SEED. Ezek 36:26,27 sometimes used in connection with this verse covers the millennium.

2-Some relate this statement as Jesus transforming the soul. Titus 3:5 states—NOT BY WORKS OF RIGHTEOUSNESS WHICH WE HAVE DONE, BUT ACCORDING TO HIS MERCY HE SAVED US, BY THE WASHING OF REGENERATION, AND RENEWING OF THE HOLY GHOST.

3-These words, *BAPTIZED WITH THE HOLY GHOST*, are repeated in Acts 1:5 as it is written-FOR JOHN TRULY BAPTIZED WITH WATER; BUT YE SHALL BE BAPTIZED WITH THE HOLY GHOST NOT MANY DAYS HENCE. Acts 1:8-BUT YE SHALL RECEIVE POWER, AFTER THAT THE HOLY GHOST IS COME UPON YOU: AND YE SHALL BE WITNESSES UNTO ME BOTH IN JERUSALEM, AND IN ALL JUDAEA, AND IN SAMARIA, AND UNTO THE UTTERMOST PART OF THE EARTH-ref Acts 2:2-4. Acts 11:15-16-AND AS I BEGAN TO SPEAK, THE HOLY GHOST FELL ON THEM, AS ON US AT THE BEGINNING. THEN REMEMBERED I THE WORD OF THE LORD, HOW THAT HE SAID, JOHN INDEED BAPTIZED WITH WATER; BUT YE SHALL BE BAPTIZED WITH THE HOLY GHOST. It was prophesied by Joel in 2:28-29-AND IT SHALL COME TO PASS AFTERWARD, THAT I WILL POUR OUT MY SPIRIT UPON ALL FLESH; AND YOUR SONS AND YOUR DAUGHTERS SHALL PROPHECY, YOUR OLD MEN SHALL DREAM DREAMS, YOUR YOUNG MEN SHALL SEE VISIONS: AND ALSO UPON THE SERVANTS AND UPON THE HANDMAIDS IN THOSE DAYS WILL I POUR OUT MY SPIRIT.

Mt 3:11 (pt 7), AND (IN) FIRE:
ref Lk 3:16 (pt
12).

Mt 3:11 (pt 7), ref Lk 3:16 (pt 12). AND (IN) FIRE. Mark's Gospel did not mention these words. There are at least 3 interpretations of the words "AND IN FIRE" or AND WITH FIRE, or as some might say "or" fire.

1-This prophecy was fulfilled in Acts 2:2-4, as it is written: AND SUDDENLY THERE CAME A SOUND FROM HEAVEN AS OF A RUSHING MIGHTY WIND,...AND THERE APPEARED UNTO THEM CLOVEN TONGUES LIKE AS OF FIRE, AND IT SAT UPON EACH OF THEM. AND THEY WERE ALL FILLED WITH THE HOLY GHOST, AND BEGAN TO SPEAK WITH OTHER TONGUES, AS THE SPIRIT GAVE THEM UTTERANCE. This prophecy was fulfilled on Pentecost-ref Acts 2:1, ref verses: Acts 1:5; 8:16,17.

2-There are many others that equate this portion of Scripture with a baptism of judgment or baptism of fire on the unrepentant when Jesus returns. The next Scripture refers to such a judgment and also some of the Scriptures John quoted did refer to the second coming. Note the next verse (Mt 3:12) is relating to the judgment. The second death is this: AND DEATH AND HELL WERE CAST INTO THE LAKE OF FIRE. THIS IS THE SECOND DEATH. AND WHOSOEVER WAS NOT FOUND WRITTEN IN THE BOOK OF LIFE WAS CAST INTO THE LAKE OF FIRE-Rev 20:14,15. This takes place at the Great White Throne Judgment.

3-There are some that believe this referred to the separation, cleansing and judging of those that were to enter into the

Mt 3:12, ref Lk 3:17.

WHOSE FAN (or winnowing fork) IS IN HIS HAND, AND HE WILL THOROUGHLY PURGE (or clean, or clear out) HIS (threshing) FLOOR, AND (He will) GATHER HIS WHEAT INTO THE GARNER (or barn); BUT HE WILL BURN UP THE CHAFF (or straw) WITH UNQUENCHABLE FIRE.

kingdom such as covered in Mt 25:31-46, Mal 4:1, or Mal 3:2,3.

To be born of the Spirit means that the Spirit indwells the believer. It is written-Ro 8:9-Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his, ref Eph 2:22.

To be baptized in the Spirit is that which is evidenced by one or more of the Spiritual gifts.

Mt 3:12, ref Lk 3:17. WHOSE FAN (or winnowing fork). (This is something to remove the waste from the grain (or wheat) by a current of air, a tool used to toss grain into the air so the chaff or unusable part is blown away), like a pitchfork throwing the remains of the pulverized stalks (the husks and grain) into the air. It is a violent process. The reference is addressing the true believers (the good grain) and the unbelievers (the chaff). Christians will go through many different and difficult trials and times in their walk with the Lord to test their faith, to see if it is genuine, and to strengthen their trust and dependence in Jesus. Mt 7:25,27 talks about the winds blowing and beating upon the house. Those that built upon Jesus will stand firm. Those that do not build upon Jesus will have a great fall. The verse continues—

IS IN HIS HAND. We may say the fan or winnowing fork that is in His hand is to test, purge, and prove each person, and ultimately which is the chaff and true grain will be revealed.. The verses continue—

AND HE (which is Jesus)—

WILL THOROUGHLY PURGE (or clean, or clear out). Jesus will test, prove, and separate. The verse continues—

HIS (threshing) FLOOR. When Jesus returns He will clean the earth from sin. He will clear out His threshing floor. He will separate the good grain (those that trusted in Him) from the chaff (or those that did not trust in Him). Some people may ask the question—why am I here? One answer may be to see who will *follow* Jesus and who will not. People are being tested and proved so He will know what is in their heart. People in Christ that do not bear fruit will be taken away. Those in Christ that do bear fruit will be purged so it will bring forth more fruit-ref Jn 15:2. All Christians will go through a warfare between the flesh and Spirit. Note the Bible study on being proved or tested which should follow shortly. The verse continues—

AND (He will)

GATHER HIS WHEAT INTO THE GARNER (or barn). Jesus will gather the saints (His wheat), those that humble themselves and trust in Him to be with Him. They will inherit the kingdom prepared for them from the foundation of the world-Mt 25:35. They will inherit eternal life-ref Mt 25:46. The verses continue—

BUT HE WILL BURN UP THE CHAFF (or straw). Jesus will burn up the unsaved-the straw, the unprofitable, the excuse-maker, the conceited, the prideful, those that follow self (the self-centered), those that exalt themselves, and all that practice sin. They will ultimately go to the lake of fire which was prepared for the devil and his angels-ref Mt 25:41. The verses continue—

WITH UNQUENCHABLE FIRE. The unsaved shall be cast into unquenchable fire. Mt 3:10 tells us-AND NOW ALSO THE AXE IS LAID UNTO THE ROOT OF THE TREES: THEREFORE EVERY TREE WHICH BRINGETH NOT FORTH GOOD FRUIT IS HEWN DOWN AND CAST INTO THE FIRE.

Commentary scriptures continue on pg. 148

SELF MUST BE DESTROYED

If self (self-effort, self-reliance, self-motivation, self-will, self exaltation, self-esteem, self-centeredness, self-pride, self-conceit, selfish desires, self-interest, selfishness, even self-pity.) is not destroyed now and repented of, then expect that such a person will be cast into the lake of fire. The old worldly nature of self with its flesh, needs to be destroyed, so the new nature can come in and grow. New wine must be put into new bottles so both are preserved-ref Mt 9:17. The destruction of self begins at repentance. It is a continuing work of God in ones life, to those that do not resist and rebel.

Should self not be destroyed expect the bottles to be marred, and broken, and the wine will run out.

The self centered people will be in the lake of fire and there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth. What pride, conceit, self reliance, self effort, self motivation, or self esteem can there be as one is tormented day and night for ever and ever?. Are you ready for that judgment?

GROWTH: WHY DON'T MOST CHRISTIANS GROW?

Among the main obstacles hindering the growth of Christians is this—the word-self. Intelligence, and education have nothing to do with the destruction of self. Two people come to Christ. All things are equal. Yet one year later the one has grown in faith, in the fear of God, in the wisdom of God, and is learning to obey God. The other is still as they were the year

previously. Why is this? Some people come to God with a humbled and willing heart and a ready mind-ref 1 Pe 5:2; 2 Cor 8:18; Ex 35:5 ready for the master to remold them as their clay is soft. Other people come to God but their heart is not humbled and willing as it ought to be, and their mind is not ready. Their clay is not soft enough to be remolded. These are in great danger of falling and the wine running out.

John the Baptist said it clearly in Jn 3:30-HE (Jesus) MUST INCREASE, BUT I MUST DECREASE. If a person is to follow Jesus, they MUST decrease. Few people will make this sacrifice. Few will enter heaven. Most will be burnt up as the chaff. It has been said that our actions are important, but our reactions are even more important. How do you react to adversity? Do you react as Christ would have you do in each situation that arises?

TESTED
PROVED

Ex 16:4-THEN SAID THE LORD UNTO MOSES, BEHOLD, I WILL RAIN BREAD FROM HEAVEN FOR YOU; AND THE PEOPLE SHALL GO OUT AND GATHER A CERTAIN RATE EVERY DAY, THAT *I MAY PROVE THEM*, WHETHER THEY WILL WALK IN MY LAW, OR NO.

Ex 20:20-AND MOSES SAID UNTO THE PEOPLE, FEAR NOT: FOR GOD IS COME *TO PROVE YOU*, AND THAT HIS FEAR MAY BE BEFORE YOUR FACES, THAT YE SIN NOT.

Deut 8:2-AND THOU SHALT REMEMBER ALL THE WAY WHICH THE LORD THY GOD LED THEE THESE FORTY YEARS IN THE WILDERNESS, *TO HUMBLE THEE, AND TO PROVE THEE, TO KNOW WHAT WAS IN THINE HEART*, WHETHER THOU Wouldest KEEP HIS COMMANDMENTS, OR NO.

Deut 8:16-WHO FED THEE IN THE WILDERNESS WITH MANNA, WHICH THY FATHERS KNEW NOT, THAT HE MIGHT *HUMBLE THEE*, AND THAT HE MIGHT *PROVE THEE*, TO DO THEE GOOD AT THY LATTER END;

Judges 2:22-THAT THROUGH THEM I MAY *PROVE ISRAEL*, WHETHER THEY WILL KEEP THE WAY OF THE LORD TO WALK THEREIN, AS THEIR FATHERS DID KEEP IT, OR NOT.

Judges 3:1-NOW THESE ARE THE NATIONS WHICH THE LORD LEFT, *TO PROVE ISRAEL* BY THEM, EVEN AS MANY OF ISRAEL AS HAD NOT KNOWN ALL THE WARS OF CANAAN;

Judges 3:4-AND THEY WERE *TO PROVE ISRAEL* BY THEM, TO KNOW WHETHER THEY WOULD HEARKEN UNTO THE COMMANDMENTS OF THE LORD, WHICH HE COMMANDED THEIR FATHERS BY THE HAND OF MOSES.

Jn 6:6-AND THIS HE SAID *TO PROVE HIM*: FOR HE HIMSELF KNEW WHAT HE WOULD DO.

Ro 12:2-AND BE NOT CONFORMED TO THIS WORLD: BUT BE YE TRANSFORMED BY THE RENEWING OF YOUR MIND, THAT *YE MAY PROVE* WHAT IS THAT GOOD, AND ACCEPTABLE, AND PERFECT, WILL OF GOD.

2 Cor 8:8-I SPEAK NOT BY COMMANDMENT, BUT BY OCCASION OF THE FORWARDNESS OF OTHERS, AND *TO PROVE THE SINCERITY OF YOUR LOVE*.

Some reasons for your existence is to be tested (or proved) to see if you will obey God's Word, to see if you will fear Him, and sin not, to know what is in your heart, to know if you will obey, and hearken to His commandments, to see how you will react to many situations-including difficult and stressful ones, to see if you will keep the way of the Lord and walk therein, and to test the sincerity of your love, and to humble you.

THE GATHERING OF THE PEOPLE AND THE JUDGMENT SEAT OF CHRIST

When Jesus returns-these prophecies of John the Baptist shall be fulfilled

(These relate to Mt 2:12 and Mt 3:10)

And THEY SHALL LICK THE DUST LIKE A SERPENT, THEY SHALL MOVE OUT OF THEIR HOLES LIKE WORMS OF THE EARTH: THEY SHALL BE AFRAID OF THE LORD OUR GOD, AND SHALL FEAR BECAUSE OF THEE-Mic 7:17. This is regarding those that survive Armageddon.

For THE KINGDOM OF HEAVEN IS LIKE UNTO A NET, THAT WAS CAST INTO THE SEA, AND GATHERED OF EVERY KIND: WHICH, WHEN IT WAS FULL, THEY DREW TO SHORE, AND SAT DOWN-Mt 13:47,48. This is the gathering of the people for Judgment at the judgment seat of Christ after Jesus returns.

And this know, THE HARVEST IS THE END OF THE WORLD; AND THE REAPERS ARE THE ANGELS-Mt 13:39. This is the gathering of the people for Judgment at the judgment seat of Christ after Jesus returns.

For THE SON OF MAN SHALL SEND FORTH HIS ANGELS, AND THEY SHALL GATHER OUT OF HIS KINGDOM ALL THINGS THAT OFFEND, AND THEM WHICH DO INIQUITY-Mt 13:41. This is the gathering of the people for Judgment at the judgment seat of Christ after Jesus returns.

AND HE SHALL SEND HIS ANGELS WITH A GREAT SOUND OF A TRUMPET, AND THEY SHALL GATHER TOGETHER HIS ELECT FROM THE FOUR WINDS, FROM ONE END OF HEAVEN TO THE OTHER-Mt 24:31; FROM THE UTTERMOST PART OF THE EARTH TO THE UTTERMOST PART OF HEAVEN-Mk 13:27. This is the gathering of the people for Judgment at the judgment seat of Christ after Jesus returns.

I WILL SEND FOR MANY FISHERS, SAITH THE LORD, AND THEY SHALL FISH THEM; AND AFTER WILL I SEND FOR MANY HUNTERS, AND THEY SHALL HUNT THEM FROM EVERY MOUNTAIN, AND FROM EVERY HILL, AND OUT OF THE HOLES OF THE ROCKS-Jere 16:16. This is the gathering of the people for Judgment at the judgment seat of Christ after Jesus returns.

HE SHALL CALL TO THE HEAVENS FROM ABOVE, AND TO THE EARTH, THAT HE MAY JUDGE HIS PEOPLE. GATHER MY SAINTS TOGETHER UNTO ME; THOSE THAT HAVE MADE A COVENANT WITH ME BY SACRIFICE. AND THE HEAVENS SHALL DECLARE HIS RIGHTEOUSNESS: FOR GOD IS JUDGE HIMSELF-Ps 50:4-6. This is the gathering of the people for Judgment at the judgment seat of Christ after Jesus returns.

Mt 25:31-46-WHEN THE SON OF MAN SHALL COME IN HIS GLORY, AND ALL THE HOLY ANGELS WITH HIM, THEN SHALL HE SIT UPON THE THRONE OF HIS GLORY: AND BEFORE HIM SHALL BE GATHERED ALL NATIONS: AND HE SHALL SEPARATE THEM ONE FROM ANOTHER, AS A SHEPHERD DIVIDETH HIS SHEEP FROM THE GOATS: AND HE SHALL SET THE SHEEP ON HIS RIGHT HAND, BUT THE GOATS ON THE LEFT.

THEN SHALL THE KING SAY UNTO THEM ON HIS RIGHT HAND, COME, YE BLESSED OF MY FATHER, INHERIT THE KINGDOM PREPARED FOR YOU FROM THE FOUNDATION OF THE WORLD: FOR I WAS AN HUNGRED, AND YE GAVE ME MEAT: I WAS THIRSTY, AND YE GAVE ME DRINK: I WAS A STRANGER, AND YE TOOK ME IN: NAKED, AND YE CLOTHED ME: I WAS SICK, AND YE VISITED ME: I WAS IN PRISON, AND YE CAME UNTO ME. THEN SHALL THE RIGHTEOUS ANSWER HIM, SAYING, LORD, WHEN SAW WE THEE AN HUNGRED, AND FED THEE? OR THIRSTY, AND GAVE THEE DRINK? WHEN SAW WE THEE A STRANGER, AND TOOK THEE IN? OR NAKED, AND CLOTHED THEE? OR WHEN SAW WE THEE SICK, OR IN PRISON, AND CAME UNTO THEE? AND THE KING SHALL ANSWER AND SAY UNTO THEM, VERILY I SAY UNTO YOU, INASMUCH AS YE HAVE DONE IT UNTO ONE OF THE LEAST OF THESE MY BRETHREN, YE HAVE DONE IT UNTO ME.

THEN SHALL HE SAY ALSO UNTO THEM ON THE LEFT HAND, DEPART FROM ME, YE CURSED, INTO EVERLASTING FIRE, PREPARED FOR THE DEVIL AND HIS ANGELS: FOR I WAS AN HUNGRED, AND YE GAVE ME NO MEAT: I WAS THIRSTY, AND YE GAVE ME NO DRINK: I WAS A STRANGER, AND YE TOOK ME NOT IN: NAKED, AND YE CLOTHED ME NOT: SICK, AND IN PRISON, AND YE VISITED ME NOT. THEN SHALL THEY ALSO ANSWER HIM, SAYING, LORD, WHEN SAW WE THEE AN HUNGRED, OR ATHIRST, OR A STRANGER, OR NAKED, OR SICK, OR IN PRISON, AND DID NOT MINISTER UNTO THEE? THEN SHALL HE ANSWER THEM, SAYING, VERILY I SAY UNTO YOU, INASMUCH AS YE DID IT NOT TO ONE OF THE LEAST OF THESE, YE DID IT NOT TO ME.

AND THESE SHALL GO AWAY INTO EVERLASTING PUNISHMENT: BUT THE RIGHTEOUS INTO LIFE ETERNAL.

For I WILL SAY TO THE REAPERS, GATHER YE TOGETHER FIRST THE TARES, AND BIND THEM IN BUNDLES TO BURN THEM: BUT GATHER THE WHEAT INTO MY BARN-Mt 13:30.

AND HE (Jesus) WILL THOROUGHLY PURGE HIS FLOOR, AND GATHER HIS WHEAT INTO THE GARNER-Mt 3:12.

And they GATHERED THE GOOD INTO VESSELS-Mt 13:48. This is the gathering of the people for Judgment at the judgment seat of Christ after Jesus returns.

It is written, WHEN THE WICKED ARE CUT OFF, THOU SHALT SEE IT-Ps 37:34. This is the Judgment at the judgment seat of Christ after Jesus returns.

Indeed, THE WICKED SHALL NOT INHABIT THE EARTH-Pv 10:30. This is the Judgment at the judgment seat of

Christ after Jesus returns.

For the bad shall be cast away-ref Mt 13:48. This is the Judgment at the judgment seat of Christ after Jesus returns.

AS THEREFORE THE TARES ARE GATHERED AND BURNED IN THE FIRE; SO SHALL IT BE IN THE END OF THIS WORLD-Mt 13:40. This is the Judgment at the judgment seat of Christ after Jesus returns.

THE WICKED SHALL BE CUT OFF FROM THE EARTH, AND THE TRANSGRESSORS SHALL BE ROOTED OUT OF IT-Pv 2:22. This is the Judgment at the judgment seat of Christ after Jesus returns.

AND (they) SHALL CAST THEM INTO A FURNACE OF FIRE: THERE SHALL BE WAILING AND GNASHING OF TEETH-Mt 13:42,50. This is the Judgment at the judgment seat of Christ after Jesus returns.

For HE WILL BURN UP THE CHAFF WITH UNQUENCHABLE FIRE-Mt 3:12. This is the Judgment at the judgment seat of Christ after Jesus returns. The verses continue—

Lk 3:18. AND (with) MANY OTHER THINGS (or words, or warnings besides these) IN HIS EXHORTATION PREACHED HE (the Gospel or Good News) (TO) THE PEOPLE.

Lk 3:18. AND (with) MANY OTHER THINGS (or words, or warnings besides these) IN HIS EXHORTATION. As shown, John preached, taught, warned, and exhorted people. The verse continues—**PREACHED HE (the Gospel or Good News)**

(TO) THE PEOPLE. John preached and taught many more things than are listed in the Scriptures. John’s preaching was stern and straight forward. He did not teach to please men but to please God. It may be said that he demanded repentance that would lead to a person becoming a new creation and having evidence to prove it. It was not the kind of preaching that is done in most churches professing Christ today. It was not politically correct as a degenerate generation might say. How wonderful it would be if pastors would preach as John the Baptist did, as Christ did, and as the apostles did. How wonderful it would be if pastors would preach to please God rather than to please people and to fill their churches with the unconverted and lukewarm Christians.

Commentary scriptures continue on pg. 149

JOHN THE BAPTIST PREACHED (SUMMARY)

He preached repentance.

He taught that the kingdom of God was near.

He taught about baptism and he baptized people.

He announced the coming of one mightier than He (the Christ).

After Jesus Christ came, he announced that this is He-ref Jn 1:30.

He prophesied.

People confessed their sins openly (something few do these days).

People were baptized.

He called that generation-snakes.

He warned people to flee from the wrath to come.

He warned them about (saying to themselves certain things) or making excuses and trying to justify themselves.

He showed what fruits of repentance were.

He warned them and discredited their wrong thoughts and excuses.

He warned them about not producing good fruit.

He told the people what things to do—which some of them undoubtedly did not like.

He greatly humbled himself and indicated he was nothing when compared to the one that was to come.

He warned people about judgment.

He sought no personal glory or worldly comforts. He did not wear soft clothing. He did not eat the finer foods.

How many of these things does your preacher teach? John did not shrink back from preaching repentance. Did he preach to please God or the people? His teaching ultimately cost him his head. His preaching offended people, especially the unrepentant. John’s preaching likely would not fill many churches today. It would drive many people away. Neither John or Jesus preached using foolishness and jokes to attract people, to lessen the impact of what they were saying, or to illustrate something. Neither would one find people laughing hysterically as John the Baptist taught. The preaching of John, of Christ, and the apostles usually accomplished one of two things. It convicted many of sin, caused some to come to true Biblical repentance, and angered others.

PREACHING: HOW TO DO IT

PREACH GOD'S WORD**REPENTANCE**

For more on Repentance, see Mt 3:6; 3:8; 3:11 (pt 2); Lk 3:3 (pt 2); Jn 3:18.

(Pg. 122; 124; 125; 126; 135; 148; 267; 280).

Preachers today tell stories about themselves, their families, things they own, and places they went. If a person went and asked members of most congregations what they knew about Jesus and what they knew about their preacher, most would know far more about their preacher and his family than about God—God forbid. Some of the best comedians in the world are not in Hollywood, but in the pulpits. There is more laughing in some churches than in fun centers.

Many preachers begin their sermons with one to three verses. Then they use worldly stories to illustrate points they want to make. Is this God's way or man's way? Can you imagine John the Baptist, the Apostles, or Jesus teaching this way?

The FOOLISHNESS OF PREACHING-ref 1 Cor 1:21, as John did, is needed in today's churches. This is what pleased God to save people-1 Cor 1:21. People do not come to know God through worldly wisdom-ref 1 Cor 1:21. Paul makes it very clear, 1 Cor 2:4-AND MY SPEECH AND MY PREACHING WAS NOT WITH ENTICING WORDS OF MAN'S WISDOM... 1 Cor 1:18-FOR THE PREACHING OF THE CROSS IS TO THEM THAT PERISH FOOLISHNESS; BUT UNTO US WHICH ARE SAVED IT IS THE POWER OF GOD.

What are we to preach? It is written, 2 Tim 4:2- PREACH THE WORD; BE INSTANT IN SEASON, OUT OF SEASON; REPROVE, REBUKE, EXHORT WITH ALL LONGSUFFERING AND DOCTRINE. Preach the WORD, the WORD, the WORD. Preach the Bible. This is not talking about men's word, but God's Word—the Bible. Preach Jesus Christ-ref Ro 16:25. Preach the WORD OF THE LORD-Acts 15:35. Mt 28:19-20-GO YE THEREFORE, AND TEACH ALL NATIONS, BAPTIZING THEM IN THE NAME OF THE FATHER, AND OF THE SON, AND OF THE HOLY GHOST: TEACHING THEM TO OBSERVE ALL THINGS WHATSOEVER I HAVE COMMANDED YOU... Lk 24:47-AND THAT REPENTANCE AND REMISSION OF SINS SHOULD BE PREACHED IN HIS NAME AMONG ALL NATIONS... Did you hear it? Correct and rebuke people. Preach repentance, obedience, and doctrine. When is the last time you heard a church doing that?

Acts 8:4-THEREFORE THEY THAT WERE SCATTERED ABROAD WENT EVERY WHERE PREACHING THE WORD. By preaching God Word, as God told them to do and not man's enticing words and worldly wisdom, many were saved. It is not so today. Despite churches and ministries claiming huge numbers of people coming to Jesus, where is the evidence? Where are they? Where is their repentance? Where is their crucifixion of self?

This is the day (right now) that had to come when preaching such as John, the apostles, and Jesus did, would not be tolerated. It is written-2 Tim 2:3,4-FOR THE TIME WILL COME WHEN MEN WILL NOT PUT UP WITH SOUND DOCTRINE (this is today). INSTEAD, TO SUIT THEIR OWN DESIRES, THEY WILL GATHER AROUND THEM A GREAT NUMBER OF TEACHERS TO SAY WHAT THEIR ITCHING EARS WANT TO HEAR (this is today). THEY WILL TURN THEIR EARS AWAY FROM THE TRUTH AND TURN ASIDE TO MYTHS (this is today)-NIV.

(Milk is the basics of the Bible) Today's preaching is, at best, nothing more than watered-down milk. It is no more than a few basic Scriptures with lots of other things intermixed. The milk of the pure word—can one find it anymore? What about the meat of the Word—perfection? Any mother should know that if she mixes one part of milk and 10 parts of water together and feeds her baby with this, he will surely die after a period of time or at least be very sick. So it is in today's churches with Christians or nominal Christians. They are sick and blind, and they KNOWEST NOT-ref Rev 3:17. They are NAKED—that is, they are not clothed with Christ, but they think they are. This is confirmed in today's church-Rev 3:14-21. The whole Laodicean, lukewarm (nominal) church will be spit out by God unless it repents. Today's church has Jesus standing outside the door, not inside-Rev 3:20. Today's church is asleep-ref Mt 25:4. God's kind of preaching will drive many people away, but it will drive others to their knees in repentance. Are you one of the many that likes most preaching today, or are you one of the very few that wants to wake up and be corrected, rebuked, and die to self? The verses continue—

FROM GALILEE TO THE JORDAN**RIVER****JESUS COMES TO JOHN****APP. 30 YEARS AFTER HIS BIRTH**

Mk 1:9 (pt 1).

AND IT (CAME ABOUT) (shortly thereafter)

Mk 1:9 (pt 1).

AND IT (CAME ABOUT) (shortly thereafter) IN THOSE DAYS,

IN THOSE DAYS,

Mt 3:13 (pt 1). THEN (CAME) (or arrived) JESUS

Mt 3:13 (pt 1). THEN. The word “then” signifies one of the great moments in history. The ministry of Jesus is about to begin. The fulfillment of many prophecies from the Old Testament is about to unfold. The unsearchable riches of Christ is about to be made known-ref Eph 3:8. The mystery, which from the beginning of the world, hath been hid in God, who created all things by Jesus Christ is about to be revealed-ref Eph 3:9. The fullness of the time had come-ref Gal 4:4. To the intent that now unto the principalities and powers in heavenly places might be known by the church the manifold wisdom of God-ref Eph 3:10. Jesus would soon open His mouth in parables and utter things, which have been kept secret from the foundation of the world-ref Mt 13:35. The revelation of the mystery, which was kept secret since the world began is about to unfold-ref Ro 16:25. The verse continues—THEN

(CAME) (or arrived) JESUS. The ministry of Jesus, which was about to begin, would last about 3 ½ years. It would end at Calvary. The verses continue—

Mk 1:9 (pt 2). THAT JESUS CAME FROM NAZARETH

Mk 1:9 (pt 2). THAT JESUS CAME FROM NAZARETH. (Note-for additional information on Nazareth, see Lk 1:26; 2:51; 4:16 and Mt 2:23). The verses continue—

**Mk 1:9 (pt 3), ref
Mt 3:13 (pt 2).** OF GALILEE,

Mk 1:9 (pt 3), ref Mt 3:13 (pt 2). OF GALILEE. This is confirmed in other Scriptures. The town of Nazareth of Galilee was the home of Mary and Joseph. They traveled to Bethlehem where Jesus was born to fulfill the Scriptures. They remained there for a short time, at which time, the wise men came. Afterward they fled to Egypt to avoid the young child from being killed. A short time later they returned to Nazareth which is where Jesus grew up and became a carpenter. At approximately 30 years of age, He traveled to the location of John the Baptist and was baptized. This is why He was often called Jesus of Nazareth. This is also why he was referred to as being of Galilee.

It is written in Mk 6:3-IS NOT THIS THE CARPENTER? His custom was to read in the Synagogue. Lk 4:16-...NAZARETH, WHERE HE HAD BEEN BROUGHT UP: AND, AS HIS CUSTOM WAS, HE WENT INTO THE SYNAGOGUE ON THE SABBATH DAY, AND STOOD UP FOR TO READ.

Jesus now comes—

Mt 3:13 (pt 3). TO (the) JORDAN (COMING TO) JOHN, TO
BE BAPTIZED (or immersed) OF HIM.

Mt 3:13 (pt 3). TO (the) JORDAN (COMING TO) JOHN. Jesus humbled Himself. God, the Messiah which came in the flesh, came to John. Jesus Christ MADE HIMSELF OF NO REPUTATION (or made Himself nothing), AND TOOK UPON HIM THE FORM OF A SERVANT, AND WAS MADE IN THE LIKENESS OF MEN: AND BEING FOUND IN FASHION AS A MAN, HE HUMBLLED HIMSELF, AND BECAME OBEDIENT UNTO DEATH-Phili 2:7,8.

The northern Jordan River flows into the Sea of Galilee. The southern Jordan River flows out of the southern part of the Sea of Galilee and then flows south into the Dead Sea. Jesus may have walked eastward, down the mountain to the southern part of the Jordan River and then southward along the Jordan River until He came to the place where John the Baptist was baptizing. John grew up near Jerusalem and Jesus in Nazareth. The distance between the two would have been about 65 to 90 miles, depending on which way one would travel. Due to the difficulty of travel in those days, as well as the way the Scriptures read, it appears they seldom, if ever, saw each other. The verse continues—

TO BE BAPTIZED (or immersed) OF HIM. The word *baptizo* means to dip or immerse in the water. It does not mean sprinkle. People that want to follow Jesus should also do as Jesus did, that is—be baptized by full immersion after repenting of their sins and after believing on Jesus Christ as their only hope of salvation.

Jesus was made under the law-Gal 4:4, but was not born under the curse of sin from Adam. Jesus never sinned-ref Heb 4:15. He came to the baptism of John to fulfill all righteousness. The other people came to the baptism of John because of sin. Jesus came at an exact time as appointed in the Scriptures, as it is written, Gal 4:4,5-BUT WHEN THE FULNESS OF THE TIME WAS COME, GOD SENT FORTH HIS SON, MADE OF A WOMAN, MADE UNDER THE LAW, TO REDEEM THEM THAT WERE UNDER THE LAW, THAT WE MIGHT RECEIVE THE ADOPTION OF SONS.

JOHN WANTED TO BE BAPTIZED

30 YEARS

Mt 3:14. BUT JOHN (TRIED TO STOP) (or prevent)
HIM, SAYING, I HAVE NEED TO BE

Mt 3:14. BUT JOHN (TRIED TO STOP) (or prevent) HIM. John’s baptism was a baptism reflecting repentance. Jesus Christ, the Lamb of God, did not need repentance, thus it may be said that John tried to stop Him—

BAPTIZED (or immersed) OF (YOU), AND (YOU COME) TO ME?

SAYING, I HAVE NEED

TO BE BAPTIZED (or immersed) OF (YOU). Note John's words—I *HAVE NEED TO BE BAPTIZED*. The words of John the Baptist should be the words of all people that want to follow Jesus, that is—to be baptized by full immersion after repenting of their sins and after believing on Jesus Christ as their only hope of salvation. The verse continues—

AND (YOU COME) TO ME? John earlier had said of the coming of the one after him, that he was not even worthy to untie the strap of His sandals. Now the Christ came to John to be baptized. How unworthy John must have felt. Jesus Christ, who knew no sin, came to John (who was a man, a sinner) to be baptized.

Those closest to God realize how much more of God they need. Those further from God sometimes do not.

The closer a person is to the light, the more dirt he can see. The further a person is from the light, the less dirt he can see.

Those whose consciousness is seared as with a hot iron, may see no dirt at all. They may think of themselves as a good person. They may think they do nothing wrong.

Those that have the purest hearts can see how much more cleansing they need. The cleaner a person is, the more they can see the need for more cleansing.

John, the greatest born of women, considered himself as unworthy and as nothing, as he stood in the presence of Jesus.

This is not the attitude of most ministers and people in this generation.

Mt 3:15.

AND JESUS ANSWERING SAID (TO) HIM, (LET) (or permit) IT TO BE (THIS WAY) (AT THIS TIME): FOR (IN THIS WAY) (WE SHOULD) (DO EVERYTHING RIGHTEOUSNESS REQUIRES-JNT). THEN HE (PERMITTED) (or allowed) HIM.

Mt 3:15. AND JESUS ANSWERING SAID (TO) HIM,

(LET) (or permit) IT TO BE (THIS WAY) (AT THIS TIME). These are the second set of words that Jesus is recorded saying in the Bible. Here is God, manifested in the flesh, telling John to let it be so now. John could only obey.

Jesus never said to John the Baptist that he should not be baptized. He simply indicated that AT THIS TIME it was time for Him to be baptized. If John was ever baptized later on is not known. John was filled with the Holy Ghost even from his mother's womb-ref Lk 1:15. The verse continues—

FOR (IN THIS WAY) (WE SHOULD) (DO EVERYTHING) RIGHTEOUSNESS (requires). Christ completely humbled Himself. He was sent and made in the likeness of sinful flesh and for sin-ref Ro 8:3, but He never sinned. The act of water baptism by immersion for Jesus at this time was, as Jesus said, FOR THUS IT BECOMETH US TO FULFILL ALL RIGHTEOUSNESS. Christ would later bear the sins of many-ref Heb 9:28. He was identifying Himself with sinners, even those He came to redeem. He came to bear the sin of others, to be a substitute, to take the sinner's place in death, so that others might have life. It is written-2 Cor 5:21-FOR HE HATH MADE HIM TO BE SIN FOR US, WHO KNEW NO SIN; THAT WE MIGHT BE MADE THE RIGHTEOUSNESS OF GOD IN HIM.

As Ro 6:3 to 5 indicates, it was also showing His death, burial, and resurrection which was yet to come. Those that repent and put their trust in Christ are also commanded to be baptized to fulfill all righteousness. John was sent by God to prepare the way of the Lord. John was the one that would have to baptize Jesus. The verse continues—

THEN HE (which is John the Baptist)

(PERMITTED) (or allowed) HIM. John obeyed. When Jesus was baptized, He made no confession of sin as the others did, as He was sinless-ref Heb 5:21; 1 Jn 3:5.

Jesus observed the feast dates. He attended and spoke in the synagogue as was His custom. Indeed, He kept the law, which no man could do-ref Jn 7:19. He also fulfilled the law-ref Mt 5:17.

BAPTISM
WATER BAPTISM

Jesus set the example regarding water baptism for all that should believe on Him to follow.

Jesus made it clear that water baptism was from and was ordained of heaven, as He asked the chief priests, scribes, and elders this question, THE BAPTISM OF JOHN, WAS IT FROM HEAVEN, OR OF MEN?-Mk 11:27,30.

When the apostles sought for a replacement for Judas, only those that had continued with them beginning from the baptism of John were considered-ref Acts 1:21-22.

The message is clear. After a person truly believes in Jesus Christ with all their heart as their only hope of salvation and have repented of their sins, then they are commanded to be baptized by full immersion IN THE NAME OF THE FATHER, AND OF THE SON, AND OF THE HOLY GHOST-ref Mt 28:19.

How is it then, that there are some that argue and speak against God's Word? The verses continue—

THE BAPTISM OF JESUS
THE HOLY SPIRIT DESCENDS
UPON HIM
30 YEARS

Lk 3:21 (pt 1). NOW WHEN ALL THE PEOPLE WERE (being) BAPTIZED, IT CAME TO PASS, THAT JESUS ALSO (was) BEING BAPTIZED,

Mk 1:9 (pt 4). AND WAS BAPTIZED (or immersed) (BY) JOHN IN (the) JORDAN.

Mt 3:16 (pt 1). AND JESUS, WHEN HE WAS BAPTIZED (or immersed), (He) WENT UP STRAIGHTWAY (or immediately) OUT OF THE WATER:

Mk 1:10 (pt 1). AND (IMMEDIATELY) (as Jesus was) COMING UP OUT OF THE WATER,

Lk 3:21 (pt 2). AND (while He was) PRAYING,

Mt 3:16 (pt 2). AND, LO,

Mk 1:10 (pt 2). HE SAW

Mt 3:16 (pt 3), ref Mk 1:10 (pt 3), Lk 3:21 (pt 3). (at that moment) THE HEAVENS

Mt 3:16 (pt 4). WERE

Mk 1:10 (pt 4). (BEING)

Mt 3:16 (pt 5), ref Mk 1:10 (pt 5), Lk 3:21 (pt 5). OPENED

Lk 3:21 (pt 1). NOW WHEN ALL THE PEOPLE WERE (being) BAPTIZED, IT CAME TO PASS, THAT JESUS ALSO (was) BEING BAPTIZED. It is noted that there were other people there being baptized at the time that Jesus came and was baptized. It is unclear, but He may have waited till all others were baptized first, and then He got baptized. The verse continues—

Mk 1:9 (pt 4). AND WAS BAPTIZED (or immersed) (BY) JOHN IN (the) JORDAN. Jesus was baptized by immersion *IN* the JORDAN. Baptism by immersion is confirmed in Col 2:12 and Ro 6:4...BURIED...IN BAPTISM and BURIED...BY BAPTISM. He was buried or immersed in the water. The verse continues—

Mt 3:16 (pt 1). AND JESUS, WHEN HE WAS BAPTIZED (or immersed), (He) WENT UP STRAIGHTWAY (or immediately) OUT OF THE WATER. Jesus went into the water, to be baptized and then came up *out* of the water. This is God's way. This is the way baptism has been done from the beginning. Men that have incorrect understanding of the Scriptures often find ways to change or nullify God's Word. They do this by creating their own traditions, or following the ways of others, or denominational traditions. Such are the cases of those that teach infant baptism, baptism by sprinkling, and any baptism that is done before a person repents and believes on Christ as their only hope of salvation. Jesus went into the water, symbolizing His coming death. He then came out symbolizing His coming resurrection and ultimate ascension. If a person has not been baptized God's way, he has not been baptized at all. Many are those that follow false denominational traditions and teachings that lead to eternal damnation. Many ignore or do not understand the clear Word of God.

The meaning of Christian baptism is best covered in Ro 6:3-11.

Mk 1:10 (pt 1). AND (IMMEDIATELY) (as Jesus was) COMING UP OUT OF THE WATER. As mentioned previously, Jesus did not confess sins as others did as He was sinless. Also He was not born under the curse of sin from Adam. The verse continues—

Lk 3:21 (pt 2). AND (while He was) PRAYING. Note that Jesus upon being baptized was also praying. Only Luke's Gospel records this. Jesus is mentioned praying many times in the New Testament. Even though He is God, yet He prayed to His Father. He depended upon His Father for all things, even as we are to do. He sought direction from His Father, as we are to do. The verse continues—

Mt 3:16 (pt 2). AND, LO,

Mk 1:10 (pt 2). HE SAW

Mt 3:16 (pt 3), ref Mk 1:10 (pt 3), Lk 3:21 (pt 3). (at that moment) THE HEAVENS. Mt 3:16 and Mk 1:10 use the word *heavens*. Lk 3:21 uses the word *heaven*. THE HEAVENS—

Mt 3:16 (pt 4). WERE

Mk 1:10 (pt 4). (BEING)

Mt 3:16 (pt 5), ref Mk 1:10 (pt 5), Lk 3:21 (pt 5). OPENED. Ref Ezek 1:1; Jn 1:51; Acts 7:56, 10:11; Rev 15:5, 19:11

5).

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Mt 3:16 (pt 6). UNTO HIM,

Mt 3:16 (pt 6). UNTO HIM. Upon coming out of the water, the very next event was the heavens being opened to Him. The ministry of the Son of God was beginning. This would lead to miracles being performed, knowledge being given, His dying on the cross, resurrection, and ascension to His Father. The price that had to be paid for mankind's redemption would soon come to pass. The long awaited promise given by God, in Gen 3:15, was beginning to be fulfilled. Secondly—

Mt 3:16 (pt 7), AND
ref Mk 1:10 (pt 6), Lk 3:22 (pt 1).

Mt 3:16 (pt 7), ref Mk 1:10 (pt 6), Lk 3:22 (pt 1). AND

Mt 3:16 (pt 8). HE SAW

Mt 3:16 (pt 8). HE (Jesus) SAW

Mt 3:16 (pt 9). THE SPIRIT

Mt 3:16 (pt 9), ref Mk 1:10 (pt 7), Lk 3:22 (pt 2). THE SPIRIT

Mt 3:16 (pt 10). OF GOD

Mt 3:16 (pt 10). OF GOD.

Mt 3:16 (pt 11), DESCENDING
ref Mk 1:10 (pt 9), Lk 3:22 (pt 4).

Mt 3:16 (pt 11), ref Mk 1:10 (pt 9), Lk 3:22 (pt 4). DESCENDING

Lk 3:22 (pt 4). IN A BODILY SHAPE (or physical form)

Lk 3:22 (pt 4). IN A BODILY SHAPE (or physical form). The Holy Spirit is the third Person of the Trinity. God is a Spirit-Jn 4:24. He (the Comforter) is called by many names, including the Spirit of Truth-ref Jn 14:17. However the world does not know Him and cannot receive Him, because it cannot see Him-ref Jn 14:17. The verse continues—

Mt 3:16 (pt 12), LIKE A DOVE,
ref Mk 1:10 (pt 8), Lk 3:22 (pt 5).

Mt 3:16 (pt 12), ref Mk 1:10 (pt 8), Lk 3:22 (pt 5). LIKE. This verse does not say that the Holy Spirit came in the form of a dove, but *like* a dove. The verses continue—
A DOVE.

DOVE

The dove can symbolize the Holy Spirit (ref Lk 3:22). It can be identified as peace with God, peace from God's Judgment-ref Gen 8:8-12 and love in SOS 5:2. The dove can be associated with sweetness-SOS 2:14; with being undefiled and praised in SOS 6:9, and with crying in Isa 38:14. Christ wept in Lk 19:41 and Jn 11:35. It is identified with being harmless or innocent in Mt 10:16. It is written regarding the children of God-BEHOLD, I SEND YOU FORTH AS SHEEP IN THE MIDST OF WOLVES: BE YE THEREFORE WISE AS SERPENTS, AND HARMLESS AS DOVES-Mt 10:16.

The dove can represent the newness of life and the new nature, which feeds on righteousness and the Word of God. We may note, three times the dove was sent forth from the ark in the Old Testament. Consider the Trinity: God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit. God is ONE GOD-ref 1 Tim 2:5, but manifested in three Persons-ref Mt 28:18, 1 Jn 1:7 and many other Scriptures. The mentioning of the dove appears in all 4 Gospels. The verses continue—

Mt 3:16 (pt 13). AND LIGHTING (or coming)

Mt 3:16 (pt 13). AND LIGHTING (or coming)

Mt 3:16 (pt 14) UPON HIM:
ref Mk 1:10 (pt

Mt 3:16 (pt 14) ref Mk 1:10 (pt 10), Lk 3:22 (pt 6). UPON HIM: (or upon Jesus). The Holy Spirit came upon Jesus at the time He came out of the water and was praying. It is written, Lk 4:18-THE SPIRIT OF THE LORD IS UPON ME,

BECAUSE HE HATH ANOINTED ME TO PREACH THE GOSPEL...ref Isa 61:1.

Also Isa 42:1-BEHOLD MY SERVANT,...*I HAVE PUT MY SPIRIT UPON HIM*:...ref Heb 1:5.

Also Isa 11:2-AND THE SPIRIT OF THE LORD SHALL REST UPON HIM, THE SPIRIT OF WISDOM AND UNDERSTANDING, THE SPIRIT OF COUNSEL AND MIGHT, THE SPIRIT OF KNOWLEDGE AND OF THE FEAR OF THE LORD.

Both Jesus Christ and John had seen the Spirit of God coming upon Jesus in a physical form as it is written-JOHN BARE RECORD, SAYING, I SAW *THE SPIRIT* DESCENDING FROM HEAVEN LIKE A DOVE, AND IT ABODE UPON HIM. AND I SAW, AND BARE RECORD THAT THIS IS THE SON OF GOD-Jn 1:32,34.

If other people saw it is not known. One might surmise that it is possible others saw this happen. The reason is that when John made the statement that he saw the Spirit of God descending, others standing by could have said they saw no such thing.

Jn 3:34 tells us, GOD GIVETH NOT THE SPIRIT BY MEASURE UNTO HIM. Jesus received the fullness of the Spirit. He also received all the gifts of the Spirit which He used during His ministry.

It is note worthy to consider that Acts 2:37 and 38 tell us-THEY SAID UNTO PETER AND TO THE REST OF THE APOSTLES,...WHAT SHALL WE DO? THEN PETER SAID UNTO THEM, (1) REPENT, (2) AND BE BAPTIZED EVERY ONE OF YOU...AND YE SHALL RECEIVE THE GIFT OF THE HOLY GHOST. It is not uncommon that people report that after they are baptized, sin becomes so much more real to them. Evil thoughts they once had may never have seemed all that bad, but now these same evil thoughts become very disturbing and sinful to them. It is written, Jn 16:7,8-THE COMFORTER...WHEN HE IS COME, HE WILL REPROVE THE WORLD OF SIN, AND OF RIGHTEOUSNESS, AND OF JUDGMENT.

God (Jesus, the Christ, the Word was God, which was made flesh-ref Jn 1:1, 14) has come down to men from heaven The Spirit of God lights upon Him.

Commentary scriptures continue on pg. 156

TRINITY
HOLY SPIRIT
FALLING AWAY

The three distinct Persons of the Godhead are clearly depicted here as being actively involved right in the beginning of Jesus' ministry.

#1-HE-Jesus, saw the

#2-SPIRIT of

#3 GOD.

#1-God the Father speaks. #2-Jesus the Christ is baptized and prays. #3-The Holy Spirit descends in a bodily shape.

As indicated previously, the world does not see or know the Holy Spirit. It cannot receive Him. It is written, ref Jn 14:16-17-The COMFORTER,...THE SPIRIT OF TRUTH; WHOM THE WORLD CANNOT RECEIVE, BECAUSE IT SEETH HIM NOT, NEITHER KNOWETH HIM: BUT YE KNOW HIM; FOR HE DWELLETH WITH YOU, AND SHALL BE IN YOU. Many people and cults deny the Spirit of God, or the understanding they have of the Holy Spirit is far removed from what is taught in the Bible. That is how the Bible indicated it would be.

This verse, along with Rev 5:7 and many others in both the Old and New Testaments, clearly illustrate the false understanding that the United Pentecostals have of the Trinity as well as those that believe that the Godhead manifests Himself in 3 modes, one at a time, or do not even believe in the three Persons of the Godhead.

Rev 5:7-AND HE #1 (Jesus) CAME AND TOOK THE BOOK OUT OF THE RIGHT HAND OF HIM THAT SAT UPON THE THRONE #2 (God the Father).

(Note Mt 28:19; 1 Cor 6:11; 2 Cor 13:14; 1 Pe 1:2)—All three Persons of the Godhead are mentioned, yet they are distinguished from each other.

Mt 28:19-GO YE THEREFORE, AND TEACH ALL NATIONS, BAPTIZING THEM IN THE NAME OF THE #1-FATHER, AND OF THE #2-SON, AND OF THE #3-HOLY GHOST. Note, it did not say the Father, the Son, etc., it said AND OF, as 3 Persons or individuals.

1 Cor 6:11-AND SUCH WERE SOME OF YOU: BUT YE ARE WASHED, BUT YE ARE SANCTIFIED, BUT YE ARE JUSTIFIED IN THE NAME OF #1-THE LORD JESUS, AND #2-BY THE SPIRIT OF #3-OUR GOD.

2 Cor 13:14-THE GRACE OF #1-THE LORD JESUS CHRIST, AND #2-THE LOVE OF GOD, AND #3-THE COMMUNION OF THE HOLY GHOST, BE WITH YOU ALL. AMEN.

1 Pe 1:2-ELECT ACCORDING TO THE FOREKNOWLEDGE OF #1-GOD THE FATHER, THROUGH SANCTIFICATION OF #2-THE SPIRIT, UNTO OBEDIENCE AND SPRINKLING OF THE BLOOD OF #3-JESUS CHRIST: GRACE UNTO YOU, AND PEACE, BE MULTIPLIED.

In Lk 9:35, God the Father speaks regarding His beloved Son. Lk 9:35-AND THERE CAME A VOICE OUT OF THE CLOUD (which is #1-God the Father), SAYING, THIS IS #2-MY BELOVED SON: HEAR HIM.

Again, the Father speaks after Jesus had spoken-ref Jn 12:28. #1-Jesus speaking said, FATHER, GLORIFY THY NAME. THEN CAME THERE A VOICE FROM HEAVEN (which is #2-God the Father) SAYING, I HAVE BOTH GLORIFIED IT, AND WILL GLORIFY IT AGAIN.

Jn 16:13-HOWBEIT WHEN HE, THE SPIRIT OF TRUTH, IS COME. The Spirit of Truth is referred to as HE, as a person. The Spirit is not a thing or force. Note Jesus speaking, showing that the Spirit had not yet come, which would indwell people. Two separate Persons.

Dan 7:13-I SAW IN THE NIGHT VISIONS, AND, BEHOLD, ONE LIKE #1-THE SON OF MAN (God the Son) CAME WITH THE CLOUDS OF HEAVEN, AND CAME #2-TO THE ANCIENT OF DAYS (God the Father),...

Through many Scriptures, the Trinity is also depicted many more times in the Old Testament.

In the Old Testament, the Holy Spirit came upon special people and gave them understanding and ability to do special tasks-ref Ex 31:3-5, and Judges 3:10. The Spirit of God descended upon Jesus. He had all the gifts of the Spirit. He was empowered to accomplish the mission that lay before Him.

Even though the Bible shows us there are three Persons of the Godhead, yet the Godhead is one. They are united together in unity, harmony, purpose, desire, and oneness, yet each has a specific mission. 1-Jesus Christ spoke the words that He heard from 2-His Father in heaven. Jesus Christ, the Son, died on the Cross. 1-God the Father created all things by 2-Jesus Christ-ref Eph 3:9.

As God the Father, Jesus Christ the Son, and the Holy Spirit are three Persons, yet they are united together as one even as the many persons of the body of Christ are united together as one. The Holy Spirit actually indwells the believer, yet the believer and the Holy Spirit are two separate Persons.

It is written, John 17:11-AND NOW I AM NO MORE IN THE WORLD, BUT THESE ARE IN THE WORLD, AND I COME TO THEE. HOLY FATHER, KEEP THROUGH THINE OWN NAME THOSE WHOM THOU HAST GIVEN ME, *THAT THEY MAY BE ONE, AS WE ARE.*

1 Jn 5:7-FOR THERE ARE THREE THAT BEAR RECORD IN HEAVEN, THE FATHER, THE WORD, AND THE HOLY GHOST: AND THESE THREE ARE ONE. Three separate Persons acting as one, united as one.

Jn 10:30-I AND MY FATHER ARE ONE. The word *one* denotes a compound unity as a cluster of grapes, harmony, purpose, desire, and oneness.

ONE: WHAT DOES IT MEAN?

ONE GOD TRINITY

Jn 17:21-23-THAT THEY (the saints) ALL MAY BE *ONE* (or in unity); AS THOU, FATHER, ART IN ME, AND I IN THEE, THAT THEY ALSO MAY BE ONE IN US (or in unity in us): THAT THE WORLD MAY BELIEVE THAT THOU HAST SENT ME. AND THE GLORY WHICH THOU GAVEST ME I HAVE GIVEN THEM; THAT THEY MAY BE *ONE* (the saints are separate persons, but are to be united as one, and are referred to as one body in Christ), EVEN AS (or in the same way that) WE (plural as in three) ARE *ONE*: (The one is further explained in this verse) I IN THEM, AND THOU IN ME, (Because Christ is in the believer, we are one with Him, yet we are separate persons), THAT THEY MAY BE MADE PERFECT IN *ONE*; AND THAT THE WORLD MAY KNOW THAT THOU HAST SENT ME, AND HAST LOVED THEM, AS THOU HAST LOVED ME.

Ro 12:5-SO WE, BEING MANY, ARE *ONE* BODY IN CHRIST, AND *EVERY ONE* MEMBERS ONE OF ANOTHER. As God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit are members one of another, so the saints are members of the body of Christ and as such are to be united as one.

1 Cor 10:17-FOR WE BEING MANY ARE *ONE* BREAD, AND *ONE* BODY: FOR WE ARE ALL PARTAKERS OF

THAT *ONE* BREAD.

1 Cor 12:12-FOR AS THE BODY IS *ONE*, AND HATH MANY MEMBERS, AND ALL THE MEMBERS OF THAT *ONE* BODY, BEING MANY, ARE *ONE* BODY: SO ALSO IS CHRIST.

Perhaps many people cannot understand these Scriptures as they do not see the body united and knit together as one in perfect unity as it ought to be. God's will is that the saints be KNIT TOGETHER IN LOVE-Col 2:2; AND...ALL THE BODY...KNIT TOGETHER-Col 2:19.

Nevertheless, God in heaven is directing each person and each ministry as He sees fit to accomplish His purpose around the world. At the same time, He is dealing with each saint to help them to deny self and draw closer to Him. Regretfully many resist and become stubborn, rebel, and fall away to their own eternal destruction. They become unfruitful and unprofitable servants as Satan tempts them to go astray. They become spiritually blind as they were before they repented. They seldom know this, because, if they did they should certainly repent. They become hardened to correction, so it is very difficult to reach them anymore with the truth of the Gospel. Spiritual darkness blinds their eyes and a deceived heart begins to follow deception. They go their own way and forget how they were before they fell-ref Ja 1:24. The verses continue—

Mt 3:17 (pt 1), AND
ref Mk 1:11 (pt
1), Lk 3:22 (pt
7).

Mt 3:17 (pt 1), ref Mk 1:11 (pt 1), Lk 3:22 (pt 6). AND

Mt 3:17 (pt 2). (BEHOLD) (suddenly)

Mt 3:17 (pt 2). (BEHOLD) (suddenly)

Mk 1:11 (pt 2). THERE CAME

Mk 1:11 (pt 2). THERE CAME

Mt 3:17 (pt 3), A VOICE (came) (OUT OF THE HEAVENS-
Mk 1:11 (pt 3), NASB), SAYING,
Lk 3:22 (pt 8).

Mt 3:17 (pt 3), Mk 1:11 (pt 3), Lk 3:22 (pt 8). A VOICE (came) (OUT OF THE HEAVENS-NASB), SAYING. This is God the Father speaking out of the heavens regarding His Son. Again, we see the Trinity—the Spirit of God lighting upon the Son, and the Father speaking. The verse continues—

Mk 1:11 (pt 4), THOU ART MY BELOVED SON (Whom I
Lk 3:22 (pt 9). love), IN WHOM I AM WELL PLEASED.

Mk 1:11 (pt 4), Lk 3:22 (pt 9). THOU ART MY BELOVED SON (Whom I love), IN WHOM I AM WELL PLEASED. It appears the Father spoke these words directly to Jesus, and no one else heard it. Then it appears He spoke a second time to John the Baptist and perhaps the others standing by. He said—

Mt 3:17 (pt 4). THIS IS MY BELOVED SON (Whom I love),
IN WHOM I AM WELL PLEASED.
(Note)-Mk 1:11 and Lk 3:22 uses the words
THOU ART rather than THIS IS, as used in
Mt.

Mt 3:17 (pt 4). THIS IS MY BELOVED SON (Whom I love), IN WHOM I AM WELL PLEASED. Beloved Son or Son whom I love—this is another name of Jesus. Note the words in Ps 2:7-I WILL DECLARE THE DECREE: THE LORD HATH SAID UNTO ME, THOU ART *MY SON*...

These words were spoken by God the Father when Jesus came up out of the water and also on the Mount of Transfiguration-ref Mk 9:7 and 2 Pe 1:17.

Let all the world hear that have ears to hear. Jesus is the long awaited Messiah, the Christ. He is the Beloved Son of God the Father, and the Father is well pleased with the Son. Hear and obey what He says. God warns THAT WHOSOEVER WILL NOT HEARKEN UNTO MY WORDS WHICH HE SHALL SPEAK IN MY NAME, I WILL REQUIRE IT OF HIM-Deut 18:19.

First, the heavens were opened to Him, after He came up out of the water.

Second, the Holy Spirit lights upon Jesus, and then

third, the pronouncement from the Father in heaven that THIS IS MY BELIEVED SON. It is a declaration of Sonship. Ps 1:7 reads-THOU ART MY SON. These same words are repeated in Acts 13:33 and Heb 1:5, 5:5. Could it be, in like manner, once a sinner repents, places their trust in Jesus Christ as their only hope (or as their substitute), then obeys God and goes into the water and comes out into the newness of life, the heavens are opened, and the Holy Spirit comes, and the sinner becomes one of the sons of God?-ref Jn 1:12; 1 Jn 3:1. It is not baptism that causes one to receive the Holy Spirit, but rather faith-ref Gal 3:2. The verse continues—

Jesus now begins the journey that the Father had laid out before Him. He would demonstrate the great love that God has for the world and what could be expected from all that choose to follow Him; yet He would be persecuted, ridiculed, insulted, accused, mocked, hated, and not believed. He had not a place to lay His head-ref Mt 8:20. People would publicly try to discredit Him and accuse Him of having a demon-ref Mt 11:18; or of being the chief of the devils, Beelzebub-ref Mk 3:22, Lk 11:15. He would suffer, be beaten, his beard plucked out, marred worse than any man, and finally be hung on a cross as a common criminal. He is from everlasting to everlasting. He is God that created all things, which came to this earth in human form and became the suffering servant. He healed the sick, raised the dead and died a horrible death, so that those that would obey Him might have eternal life. Through all this, He obeyed His Father and did not murmur, complain, accuse any falsely, or make excuses. He showed the greatest love that is possible, but was and is hated even today by many. His name is cursed and damned by people throughout the entire world. Do you hear other religious leader's names used to invoke a curse? No. The reason is Jesus is alive. He is the true God and showed people their true nature—all have sinned.

Then and today, those that follow Him as the Scriptures command, also find themselves going through some of the same things that Jesus Christ did. You that are reading this—are you truly a servant? Do you say you follow Jesus, yet murmur, complain, accuse, make excuses, and harden yourself to correction? Do you want everything to be just to your liking—that is, do you want everything to be just the way you want it to be, and if it is not, do you find fault, accuse, murmur, complain and make excuses? Are you really like Jesus? He that hath ears to hear, let him hear.

Lk 4:1 (pt 1). AND JESUS BEING FULL OF THE HOLY GHOST RETURNED FROM JORDAN,

Lk 4:1 (pt 1). **AND JESUS BEING FULL OF THE HOLY GHOST RETURNED FROM JORDAN.** Jn 3:34 states-FOR HE WHOM GOD HATH SENT (which is Jesus)...GOD GIVETH NOT THE SPIRIT BY MEASURE UNTO HIM. Acts 10:38-GOD ANOINTED JESUS OF NAZARETH WITH THE HOLY GHOST AND WITH POWER:...

THE PUBLIC MINISTRY OF JESUS
30 YEARS

Lk 3:23 (pt 1). AND JESUS HIMSELF (WAS) ABOUT THIRTY YEARS OF AGE (when He began His public ministry-JNT),

Note: Jesus was “about” 30 when He began His public ministry. It did not say exactly. He could have been a bit older. Many believe His ministry lasted 3½ years. He died on Passover. Since Passover is usually around our April, Jesus could have been born between August and November.

Lk 3:23 (pt 1). **AND JESUS HIMSELF (WAS) ABOUT THIRTY YEARS OF AGE (when He began His public ministry-JNT).** Note: Jesus was “about” 30 when He began His public ministry. It did not say exactly, He may have been a bit older. Many believe His ministry lasted 3½ years. He died on Passover. Since Passover is usually around our April, Jesus may have been born between August and November. His age was important. To do service in the Tabernacle, a person's age was to be 30 to 50. It is written, Num 4:3- FROM THIRTY YEARS OLD AND UPWARD EVEN UNTIL FIFTY YEARS OLD, ALL THAT ENTER INTO THE HOST, TO DO THE WORK IN THE TABERNACLE OF THE CONGREGATION. Other verses include: Num 4:2,4; 23; 29,30; 34,35; 38,39; 42,43; and 46,47. JOSEPH WAS THIRTY YEARS OLD WHEN HE STOOD BEFORE PHARAOH KING OF EGYPT-Gen 41:46. DAVID WAS THIRTY YEARS OLD WHEN HE BEGAN TO REIGN-2 Sam 5:4.

BIRTH OF SETH

AND ADAM LIVED AN HUNDRED AND THIRTY YEARS, AND BEGAT A SON IN HIS OWN LIKENESS, AFTER HIS IMAGE; AND CALLED HIS NAME SETH-Gen 5:3. It is also written, AND ADAM KNEW HIS WIFE AGAIN; AND SHE BARE A SON, AND CALLED HIS NAME SETH: FOR GOD, SAID SHE, HATH APPOINTED ME ANOTHER SEED (or another child) INSTEAD OF ABEL, WHOM CAIN SLEW-Gen 4:25. Seth means “the appointed one.” It was from the lineage of Seth that eventually Noah, Shem, Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Judah, David, and Joseph would come forth. And Joseph was THE HUSBAND OF MARY, OF WHOM WAS BORN JESUS, WHO IS CALLED CHRIST-Mt 1:16. And JESUS HIMSELF...BEING (AS WAS SUPPOSED) THE SON OF JOSEPH-Lk 3:23. The verses continue—

Mk 1:12 (pt 1), AND
ref Lk 4:1 (pt 2).

Mk 1:12 (pt 1), ref Lk 4:1 (pt 2). AND

Mt 4:1 (pt 1). THEN

Mt 4:1 (pt 1). THEN

Mk 1:12 (pt 2). IMMEDIATELY

Mk 1:12 (pt 2). **IMMEDIATELY.** The word “immediately” is used more in the Mark's Gospel than any other book of the KJV Bible—app. 17 times. *Immediately* following His baptism—

Mt 4:1 (pt 2), ref WAS
Lk 4:1 (pt 3).
Mt 4:1 (pt 3). JESUS

Mt 4:1 (pt 2), ref Lk 4:1 (pt 3). WAS

Mt 4:1 (pt 3). JESUS

Mt 4:1 (pt 4), ref LED UP (BY) THE SPIRIT
Lk 4:1 (pt 4).

Mt 4:1 (pt 4), ref Lk 4:1 (pt 4). **LED UP (BY) THE SPIRIT.** The word *UP* would refer to elevation. As one goes from the Jordan River to the wilderness, the elevation rises from below sea level. The verses continue—

Mt 1:12 (pt 3). THE SPIRIT (DROVE) (or impelled, or sent) HIM

Mt 1:12 (pt 3). **THE SPIRIT (DROVE) (or impelled, or sent) HIM.** The words, led, drove, sent, or impelled, means something hard to resist. Mark also uses this word in conjunction with driving out spirits. The verse continues—

Mt 4:1 (pt 5), ref INTO THE WILDERNESS (or desert)
Mk 1:12 (pt 4),
Lk 4:1 (pt 5).

Mt 4:1 (pt 5), ref Mk 1:12 (pt 4), Lk 4:1 (pt 5). **INTO THE WILDERNESS (or desert).** Jesus was baptized by John in the Jordan River. It is believed that it was near the area in which the Jordan River flows into the Dead Sea, perhaps not too far from Jericho. The area round about can be described as a wilderness or desert. The traditional place, it is believed Jesus was driven, is an area which is west or northwest of Jericho. Even today it is still a wilderness. The verses continue—

Mt 4:1 (pt 6). TO BE TEMPTED (BY) THE DEVIL (or Adversary).

Mt 4:1 (pt 6). **TO BE TEMPTED.** One might define the word tempted to mean: to seduce, entice, pressure, or provoke a person to do wrong in God’s sight—to find out what kind of a person they are.

As a person prepares to be Scripturally baptized, they can expect thoughts from the Devil saying to delay or not to do it.

As a person prepares to serve God, they need to be on their guard and expect to be tempted by the Devil not to do it. They need to prepare themselves for spiritual combat against the powers of darkness. The verse continues—

(BY) THE DEVIL (or Adversary). (The Devil or Adversary are two more names for Satan) The Holy Spirit did not tempt Jesus, but led Him up to be **TEMPTED (or tested) OF THE DEVIL** Almost immediately after being baptized, temptations were to begin. During a 40 day period, Jesus went through various temptations (or tests) by Satan.

Commentary scriptures continue on pg. 164

SPIRITUAL WARFARE. TEMPTED BY THE DEVIL

The forces of darkness are in constant opposition against God’s purposes. When a person seeks to be baptized, also after scriptural baptism, be prepared to battle Satan. Things can break down, unexpected events can happen, people can come against you, and much wrong thinking can arise in your mind. When a person prepares to fast for several days, they also need to prepare to do battle with the devil. Many have found that, after they receive baptism, Satan comes and attacks them in unexpected ways. The war has begun. Jesus was tempted in all ways as we are and yet without sin-ref Heb 4:15. God does not tempt anyone-ref Ja 1:13. Satan is used to tempt or test us as with righteous Job in the Old Testament to prove our faith genuine. This is done to see what kind of a person we are under duress (or pressure)-ref 2 Cor 8:8; Jn 6:6; Deut 8:2; Ex 20:20; Judges 3:2 and 4.

God is not willing that any should perish-ref 2 Pe 3:9. Satan is not willing that any should be saved. The Bible tells us of this conflict in each person’s life. There are times when a person feels like they are being torn apart, as if one arm is being pulled in one direction, and the other arm is being pulled in the opposite direction. It is a person’s heart that ultimately leads them to believe God’s Word as it is written or reject it-ref Ro 10:10. It is the wayside, stony, or thorny, heart that causes a person to reject and misunderstand the Scriptures and thus justify themselves through deceit. None are immune from this battle, but most are deceived as they do not even realize that such a battle is taking place in their lives. Few people realize the incredible power Satan has to tempt them, to put wrong thoughts into their minds, to stir up their emotions, to cause them to sin, and to make them believe that wrong is right and right is wrong. Few understand that Satan has the authority to stir up people against the born-again Christian. Few seem to know that Satan can even cause things to break down and accidents to happen. Satan can use a person’s emotions to be fabricators of reality rather than an indicator of reality.

The first Adam was tempted (or tested) in the Garden and fell. The second Adam (Jesus) was tempted in the wilderness and did not fall, but gave us an example of how to fight Satan. Jesus would be tested and tempted throughout His ministry.

We should never forget that Satan and his army are in constant opposition to God’s Word and purpose.

This was the beginning of another battle in the war between God and Satan to try and undue God’s plan. The target was

Jesus of Nazareth. About 29 years earlier, Satan had used Herod who killed multitudes of children in hopes he would kill the future King of Israel-ref Mt 2:16. About 4000 years earlier, he had used Cain to kill Abel trying to derail God's plan-ref Gen 4:8. There are times when a person will feel like a human pressure cooker that is ready to explode. Woe to that person whose heart agrees with the lying thoughts Satan puts in their mind.

TEMPTATIONS: WHAT ARE THEY (BRIEFLY)? EMOTIONS

It is written, 1 Pe 4:12-14, 16, 19, BELOVED, THINK IT NOT STRANGE CONCERNING THE *FIERY TRIAL* WHICH IS TO TRY YOU, AS THOUGH SOME STRANGE THING HAPPENED UNTO YOU:...IF YE BE REPROACHED FOR THE NAME OF CHRIST, HAPPY ARE YE; FOR THE SPIRIT OF GLORY AND OF GOD RESTETH UPON YOU: ON THEIR PART HE IS EVIL SPOKEN OF, BUT ON YOUR PART HE IS GLORIFIED. ...YET IF ANY MAN SUFFER AS A CHRISTIAN, LET HIM NOT BE ASHAMED; WHEREFORE LET THEM THAT SUFFER ACCORDING TO THE WILL OF GOD COMMIT THE KEEPING OF THEIR SOULS TO HIM IN WELL DOING, AS UNTO A FAITHFUL CREATOR.

1 Pe 1:6,7,9-WHEREIN YE GREATLY REJOICE, THOUGH NOW FOR A SEASON, IF NEED BE, YE ARE IN HEAVINESS THROUGH MANIFOLD *TEMPTATIONS*: THAT THE TRIAL OF YOUR FAITH, BEING MUCH MORE PRECIOUS THAN OF GOLD THAT PERISHETH, THOUGH IT BE TRIED WITH FIRE, MIGHT BE FOUND UNTO PRAISE AND HONOUR AND GLORY AT THE APPEARING OF JESUS CHRIST: RECEIVING THE END OF YOUR FAITH, EVEN THE SALVATION OF YOUR SOULS.

2 Tim 3:12-YEA, AND ALL THAT WILL LIVE GODLY IN CHRIST JESUS *SHALL SUFFER PERSECUTION*.

Ja 1:12-BLESSED IS THE MAN THAT *ENDURETH TEMPTATION*: FOR WHEN HE IS TRIED, HE SHALL RECEIVE THE CROWN OF LIFE, WHICH THE LORD HATH PROMISED TO THEM THAT LOVE HIM. However,

Lk 8:13-THEY ON THE ROCK (or we may say-the Word of God which a person hears, but has a heart that is as a rock) ARE THEY, WHICH, WHEN THEY HEAR, RECEIVE THE WORD WITH JOY; AND THESE HAVE NO ROOT, WHICH FOR A WHILE BELIEVE, AND IN *TIME OF TEMPTATION FALL AWAY*.

Satan is deceitful and clever almost beyond our understanding. He is the strong man that uses deceit, camouflage, blind attacks, surprise, stealth, and subtlety.

Temptations often result from some situation that exists, events that happen, or desires we have. We may begin to look at something in our past, something that is happening right now, or something that might happen in the future. Then we begin to have ungodly or unbiblical thoughts. We stop thinking as Christ would have us think. We do not cast down the ungodly imaginations we are having.

Temptations are various situations, difficult times, and pressures that we go through that makes us want to react. They can range from physical or mental hurts and disabilities to not even having enough money to buy food. They can be from physical pain to mental anguish. They can be from ungodly desires of the heart to selfishness, lusts, and sex. They can be from a desire to get married to the desire for pleasures, money, comfort, peace, and the better things of this world. Temptations can come from problems in a marriage to problems in serving God. They can be from about every situation one could imagine to parents, spouses, children, relatives, employers, or anyone. They can be from ones own self. They can come from fear, pride, humiliation, hurt, and anger. They can come from loving things and people more than we love God.

These are the thorns in the flesh, the fiery darts, the mental anguish, the struggles in our thoughts, the ungodly personal desires we have, the hardships, and the confusions in our mind. There can be no victory in a battle, without a battle.

This needs to be said over and over again. Sometimes we bring problems and temptations upon ourselves, because we disobey God's Word or have a wrong attitude. It is written, Eph 4:27-NEITHER GIVE PLACE TO THE DEVIL. We can open the door for Satan to tempt us and cause us problems by disobeying God, and then we want God to rescue us quickly. Sometimes He does, but often times we have to learn a lesson so we can grow in Him. As it is written of Jesus, *THOUGH HE WERE A SON, YET LEARNED HE OBEDIENCE BY THE THINGS WHICH HE SUFFERED*-Heb 5:8.

Ja 1:14-15-BUT EVERY MAN IS TEMPTED, WHEN HE IS DRAWN AWAY OF HIS OWN LUST, AND ENTICED. THEN WHEN LUST HATH CONCEIVED, IT BRINGETH FORTH SIN: AND SIN, WHEN IT IS FINISHED, BRINGETH FORTH DEATH.

Dealing with temptations can be very, very difficult. These sometimes bring us to the point where we want to give

These sometimes cause us to be angry with God, doubt Him and become bitter toward Him. These can cause us to be

dominating, overbearing, wanting our own way. They can create within us desires, hurts, impatience, and many other emotions. They can tempt us to sin. They spark a reaction in us. Our emotions can rise to the point we want to explode. Our emotions can become so out of control that they no longer reflect reality, but rather they fabricate a false reality which we choose to believe. Sometimes we just breakdown and cry. Sometimes we cry out to God, and He answers. Sometimes we cry out to God and say, "Lord, it hurts real bad. I am desperate, what can I do?" We want God to fix the situation as Paul did. However, sometimes God says, MY GRACE IS SUFFICIENT FOR THEE: FOR MY STRENGTH IS MADE PERFECT IN WEAKNESS-2 Cor 12:9. Satan tempts us trying to get us out of the will of God.

Let us not forget Job. He had lost almost everything. Then his body was so hurting that he wanted to die. His wife tempted him to curse God and die-ref Job 2:9. Yet despite the horrible situation he was in, he did not sin and speak against God.

Sometimes the temptations come slowly, in a very subtle and deceitful manner, which are hard to recognize. Other times they come suddenly without warning. One minute things seem to be going great, but the next minute it seems like the world has caved in on us.

These temptations are allowed by God, but are never from God.

The believer is being tested to see if they will react in a godly way. Their faith, or lack of faith, is being tested. Will they wait on God and trust Him no matter what, or will they react in another way, both in their words and actions? The attitude of every believer and commitment to Jesus will be tested over and over.

For some, being beaten and martyred for Christ can be ahead. This is especially the case for many during the Tribulation.

As a result of temptations, those that build on the sand find themselves defeated. Those that, through trust, build on the Rock (which is Jesus) find themselves growing stronger.

2 Cor 12:9,10-Paul said, MOST GLADLY THEREFORE WILL I RATHER GLORY IN MY INFIRMITIES, THAT THE POWER OF CHRIST MAY REST UPON ME. THEREFORE I TAKE PLEASURE IN INFIRMITIES, IN REPROACHES, IN NECESSITIES, IN PERSECUTIONS, IN DISTRESSES FOR CHRIST'S SAKE: FOR WHEN I AM WEAK, THEN AM I STRONG.

As the author wrote this, he was in some physical pain himself and was also going through some mental anguish and frustration.

When Satan attacks us in some way, one of the greatest dangers of all is that we don't recognize it. If an army going to war is attacked and doesn't recognize the attack and fight back, they may surely be wiped out or be killed. Few people in this latter day generation recognize Satan's attacks. Few people understand spiritual warfare. Few pastors, priests, and rabbi teach about it. We are told to cast down IMAGINATIONS, AND EVERY HIGH THING THAT EXALTETH ITSELF AGAINST THE KNOWLEDGE OF GOD, AND BRINGING INTO CAPTIVITY (note, bringing into captivity) EVERY THOUGHT (note, every thought) TO THE OBEDIENCE OF CHRIST-2 Cor 10:5. How can a person cast them down when they do not even recognize the thoughts they have are against the knowledge of Christ? How can a person cast down their wrong thinking when they do not believe their thinking is wrong? How can a person fight against evil thoughts they have when they do recognize they are from Satan?

Through all this we have God's promise. 1 Cor 10:13-THERE HATH NO TEMPTATION TAKEN YOU BUT SUCH AS IS COMMON TO MAN: BUT GOD IS FAITHFUL, WHO WILL NOT SUFFER YOU TO BE TEMPTED ABOVE THAT YE ARE ABLE; BUT WILL WITH THE TEMPTATION ALSO MAKE A WAY TO ESCAPE, THAT YE MAY BE ABLE TO BEAR IT. We all have need of patience. We need to learn to wait on the Lord and trust Him.

We certainly need to pray, Mt 6:13-And LEAD US NOT INTO TEMPTATION, BUT DELIVER US FROM EVIL. Then we need to obey God, so we don't open the door for Satan to tempt us.

WHERE DO TEMPTATIONS COME FROM?

People sometimes believe for a while, but the IN TIME OF TEMPTATION FALL AWAY-Lk 8:14.

Mt 4:1 shows us that *temptations come from the devil.*

Eph 6:12-shows us that temptations come from the following. FOR WE WRESTLE...AGAINST *PRINCIPALITIES*, AGAINST *POWERS*, AGAINST *THE RULERS OF THE DARKNESS OF THIS WORLD*, AGAINST *SPIRITUAL WICKEDNESS IN HIGH PLACES*. Eph 1:10-18 helps us to understand how to fight these temptations. Little do people understand or believe that the ungodly thoughts they have—the imaginations that contradict the Word of God and leads a person to disobey God—are actually coming from demonic forces that we can hear and feel but cannot see-ref 2 Cor 10:5

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