

# *To Be a Disciple*

*Unit I : The Calling of the Disciple and the One Who Calls (Matthew 1:1-4:22)*

*Lesson 501: The Appearance of John the Baptizer*

Matthew 3:1-12

CONTINUITY FROM LAST WEEK (Matthew 2:13-23)

1. Matthew is a JEW ... introducing Jesus to OT-Faith JEWS.
2. Like Moses, Jesus is pursued by a heathen king.
3. Like Moses, Jesus is sent to - and called out - from Egypt
4. Like Moses, a heathen king slaughters the Holy Innocent Children
5. Jesus is the New Israel who perfectly replays the history of Old Israel.

## **I. WHAT DO WE KNOW ABOUT JOHN THE BAPTIST?**

- A. Theologically significant figure in the NT.
- B. Meticulous recording of His birth (Luke 1:5-25)
- C. Conception marked by angelic proclamation and divine intervention (Luke 1:57-80)
- D. John's birth parallels that of Jesus.
- E. Birth echoes birth of Isaac to Abraham and Sarah (Genesis 21-1-7)
- F Pivotal figure in the salvation history of God.
- G. Formative years lived in obscurity in the desert (Luke 1:80)
- H. Public ministry ended nearly four hundred years of prophetic silence.
- I. Voice crying in the wilderness preparing the way for the Messiah (Isaiah 40:3)
- J. Message and ministry marked the culmination of the law and the prophets, but
- K heralded the inbreaking of the kingdom of God (Matthew 11:12)
- L. Link between the Old and New Testaments.
- M. Central theme of ministry: "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is near" (Matthew 3:2)
- N. Baptized those who repented and responded to his message. (Matthew 3:1)
- O. Demanded immediate action because judgment is at hand.
- P. Ascetic lifestyle was as austere as his message.
- Q. Expected people to come to him, rather than he going to them. (Matthew 3:5)
- R. Confronted the hypocrisy of the religious establishment.
- S. Chose to die a martyr's death rather than compromise convictions (Matthew 14:3-12)
- T. Viewed as reincarnation of Prophet Elijah (900 BC).
- U. Honored by Jesus in Plan of Salvation. (John 1:29-34 and Matthew 11:1)

## II. JOHN THE BAPTIZER PREPARES THE WAY (3:1-12)

A. In the WILDERNESS

B. Preaching REPENTANCE

1. Hebrew *shuv* ... a turning around
2. Malachi 4:6
3. Matthew 4:17
4. Isaiah 40:3

C. Last of the Prophets (2 Kings 1:7-8)

D. Attractional - not Incarnational

E. Water Baptism

F. Metaphors of Impending Judgment: Axe, Fire and Winnowing Fork

### STUDY QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

1. What does it mean that Jesus is the *True Israel*?
2. In what way does Jesus' life differ from the *Old Israel*?
3. What was the main emphasis of Jesus' preaching according to Matthew 3:2?
4. Why would John preaching *in the wilderness* and his *clothing* stir up such excitement in Israel?
5. What prophecy does John's appearance fulfill according to Matthew?
6. What are some of the *word pictures* that John uses to describe the coming judgment?
7. What is the term John uses to describe the Messiah who would follow him?
8. John said that the Messiah would *baptize people with the Holy Spirit and with fire*. What does that mean?
9. In what way was John's baptism *different* from previous water baptism used by Israel?
10. Why do you think God sent John to prepare the way for Jesus?
11. What do you think our response to this section of Matthew's gospel should be?