

## MATTHEW 3 NLET

### JOHN THE BAPTIST HERALDS IN THE WILDERNESS AS FORETOLD

1 Now, in the days – *that is*, those *days* – John the Baptist came to maturity, heralding in the wilderness of the *region* of Judea, 2 and saying, “Keep on changing your thinking! For, the Kingdom of the Heavens is near!”

3 For, this *one* is the one who was being spoken of by agency of<sup>1</sup> Isaiah the prophet, saying”:

**“A voice, shouting in the wilderness,**

**‘Prepare the the way of YaHWeH<sup>2</sup>!**

**Keep on making the paths *that are* His straight!’”<sup>3</sup>**

#### JOHN HAS MINIMAL POSSESSIONS AND DIET

4 Now he – *that is*, the John, for his part, was possessing

- the clothing *that was* his from hairs of a camel and
- a belt – *that is*, a leather *one* – around the loins *that were* his.

Now, the nourishment *that was* his was<sup>4</sup>

- locusts and
- honey – *that is*, wild-harvested honey.

#### THE PEOPLE RESPOND TO JOHN'S HERALDING

5 Then, Jerusalem was going out to him – and all the *region of* Judea, and all the country around the Jordan *River*.

6 And, they were being baptized in the Jordan *River*<sup>5</sup> by him, while confessing the moral failures *that were* theirs.

#### JOHN PARTICULARLY ADDRESSES THE PHARISEES AND SADDUCEES

7 Now, having seen many of the Pharisees and Sadducees coming to the Baptism *that was* his, he said

<sup>1</sup> ‘by agency of’ – 98% of the Greek manuscripts, including the best line of transmission (f35), have the Greek preposition *ἐν* here instead of *διὰ*. Both can mean ‘by agency of’

<sup>2</sup> ‘YaHWeH’ – a transliteration of the Hebrew word יהוה. The New Testament writers often use the unarticulated Greek word for ‘Lord’ to translate this divine, four-consonant name, especially when quoting Old Testament passages. Indeed, this is the name that Isaiah uses in Isaiah 40:3. It means ‘the One Who is’ or ‘He exists’.

<sup>3</sup> A reference to Isaiah 40:3.

<sup>4</sup> 99% of the Greek manuscripts, including the best line of transmission (f35), have ‘that was his was’ here instead of ‘was his’.

to them, “Brood of vipers! Who warned you to flee from the coming wrath?

8 So then, produce fruit worthy of the Change of Thinking.

9 And, do not even begin to form an opinion to say among yourselves, ‘We have a father – the *famous* Abraham’! For, I tell you that the God is able from the stones – *that is*, these – to raise up children to Abraham!

10 Now, already also<sup>6</sup> the axe-head is being laid toward the root of the trees.

So then, every tree which is not producing fruit – *that is*, beautiful *fruit* – is being cut out. And, into fire it is being thrown!”

#### JOHN DISTINGUISHES HIS PERSON AND WORK FROM THE PERSON AND WORK OF THE ONE WHO IS COMING AFTER HIM

11 On the one hand, I, for my part, am baptizing you by means of water in regard to<sup>7</sup> a change of mind.

On the other hand, the One Who comes after me is stronger than I –

- of Whom I am NOT sufficient to carry away the sandals. He, for His part, shall baptize by means of a Spirit – *namely*, the Holy One!<sup>8</sup>
- 12 of Whom the winnowing shovel *is* in the hand *that is* His.

And, He shall thoroughly clear the grain *that is* His on the threshing floor.

And, He shall gather together the grain into the storeroom.

Now, He shall burn the chaff completely with fire – *that is*, inextinguishable *fire*.”

#### THE JESUS PRESENTS HIMSELF TO JOHN TO BE BAPTIZED WITH WATER

13 Then, the Jesus was present, *having come* from the *region of* Galilee as far as the Jordan *River* to the John to be baptized by him.

<sup>5</sup> 85% of the Greek manuscripts, including the best line of transmission (f35), do not include the word for ‘river’ here, although it is implied.

<sup>6</sup> 98% of the Greek manuscripts, including the best line of transmission (f35), include the word translated as ‘also’ here.

<sup>7</sup> ‘in regard to’ – The choice of this translation of this Greek preposition comes from the range of meanings that it could have in this context and that harmonizes with what is said about baptism in similar passages, in this case, Mark 1:4 and several other parallel passages. This is standard procedure in this translation.

<sup>8</sup> 80% of the Greek manuscripts, including the best line of transmission (f35), do not include the words ‘and fire’ here. However, Luke 3:17 does supply this information.

14 Now, the John was hindering Him, saying, “I, *for my part*, have need to be baptized by YOU!” and “Should You, *for Your part*, come to me?”

15 Now, responding, the Jesus said to him, “Permit *it* just now! For, in this way, since it is fitting, *it* is that we fulfill all righteousness.”

Then, he permitted Him.

THE JESUS IS ALSO BAPTIZED WITH THE SPIRIT OF THE  
GOD

16 And,<sup>9</sup> having been baptized, the Jesus went up immediately<sup>10</sup> from the water.

And, look! The Heavens were lastingly opened for Him<sup>11</sup>!

And, he saw the<sup>12</sup> Spirit of the<sup>13</sup> God descending as a dove and<sup>14</sup> going upon Him.

THE FATHER IN HEAVEN ATTESTS  
TO THE IDENTITY OF HIS SON

17 And, look! A voice from the Heavens, saying, “This *One* is –

- the Son *that is* Mine,
- the Beloved *One*,
- with Whom I was well pleased!”

<sup>9</sup> 99% of the Greek manuscripts, including the best line of transmission (f35), include the word for ‘And,’ here.

<sup>10</sup> 98.5% of the Greek manuscripts, including the best line of transmission (f35), have ‘went up immediately’ here instead of ‘immediately went up’.

<sup>11</sup> 99.5% of the Greek manuscripts, including the best line of transmission (f35), include the word translated as ‘for Him’ here.

<sup>12</sup> 99.6% of the Greek manuscripts, including the best line of transmission (f35), include the definite article ‘the’ here.

<sup>13</sup> 99.6% of the Greek manuscripts, including the best line of transmission (f35), include the definite article ‘the’ here.

<sup>14</sup> 99.9% of the Greek manuscripts, including the best line of transmission (f35), include the conjunction ‘and’ here.