

# THE WORDS AND WORKS OF KING JESUS

## PART 2: JOHN ANNOUNCES THE ARRIVAL OF THE KING

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**M**atthew began his narrative by showing Jesus' kingship based on his genealogy and his miraculous birth. He wanted his Jewish readers to know that Jesus is a clear descent of King David, and as such, is in the royal line of Judah.

Although his name implies that he baptized people (which he did), John's life on earth was more than just baptizing. John's adult life was characterized by devotion and surrender to Jesus Christ and His kingdom. John's voice was a "lone voice in the wilderness" (John 1:23) as he proclaimed the coming of the Messiah to a people who desperately needed a Savior. He was the precursor for the modern-day evangelist as he unashamedly shared the good news of Jesus Christ. He was a man filled with faith and a role model to those of us who wish to share our faith with others.

In Chapter 3, Matthew continues to provide strong evidence of Jesus' kingship by describing John the Baptist's announcement of the arrival of the King.

In ancient times it was common for a herald to precede the arrival of a king by announcing his coming. The herald would also prepare for the king's safe and proper travel. Along with other servants the herald would make sure the roadway was as smooth and uncluttered as possible. Holes would be filled; rocks and debris would be removed, and unsightly litter would be burned or hidden.

Though John is known as "the Baptist" his role as the herald for King Jesus' first coming (Matt. 3:3) is paramount. Notice how King Jesus' second coming is also announced with a shout and trumpets in 1 Thessalonians 4:16-17. The announcing of Jesus's first and second comings gives additional confirmation of his true kingship (Messiah).

## I. REFLECTING ON THE TEXT: MATTHEW 3:1-17

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*Parallel passages Mark 1:2-8; Luke 3:1-18; John 1*

### A. John's ministry 3:1-12

In Matthew 2:23 Jesus is a baby, in 3:1 he is an adult. During these years he probably cared for his family since Joseph may have died in Jesus' younger day. The public teachings of Jesus show that he was a close observer of the sights and sounds of nature, and of the habits of all classes of men, for these are the usual sources of his illustrations.

1. (3:2) What does the word "repent" mean and why do you suppose it was one of the first things John the Baptist proclaimed?
  - Repentance means to turn from sin and in faith turn to God.
  - It is not merely feeling sorry for your sins (though this is included). It is abandoning our natural sense of rebelling against God and entering a life of obedience to God.
  - In this sense it is a change of mind (μετανοέω).
  - Why first? Repentance is necessary to enter God's kingdom.
2. (3:2) What did John mean when he said the "kingdom of heaven is at hand"?
  - The kingdom of heaven is the sphere of God's dominion over those who belong to him.
  - The kingdom of heaven has come near to people in the person of Jesus the Messiah. (See 3:17)
3. (3:5-6) What kind of a response was there to John the Baptist's preaching?
  - People from Jerusalem, all Judea, and all the region around the Jordan confessed their sins and were baptized.
  - The Pharisees and Sadducees appear to be in conflict with John (implied).
4. (3:7) Why do you suppose John the Baptist called the Pharisees and Sadducees a "brood of vipers"?
  - To the Pharisees and Sadducees who came to check up on John.
  - The Pharisees were a small (about 6,000) legalistic sect of the Jews who were known for their rigid adherence to the oral law (gezeirah).
  - The Sadducees were known for denying the supernatural, including the resurrection of the dead.
  - John was preaching repentance; the Pharisees were stressing ritual.
5. (3:8) What evidence is expected from true repentance (3:8)?
  - True repentance is proven by actions and fruitful living (Matt. 3:8; Acts 26:20; Gal. 5:22-23).

## B. John's baptism 3:13-17

Notice the connection between Isaiah 42:1 and Matthew 3:16 which shows Jesus as being God's servant to bring justice to the nations. His future role of ruling over the nations is also seen in Revelation 19:15 where he is the ruling King (Messiah) over all nations.

1. (3:13-15) Why was Jesus baptized since he never sinned (3:13-17)?
  - To show support of what John was doing.
  - To show that he was identifying with penitent people vs. Pharisees.
  - It inaugurated his ministry.
2. (3:17) What happened immediately after Jesus' baptism and why was this so important?
  - It confirmed that the eternally existing relationship of divine love that the Father and Son share. (Jesus was not a created being).

## II. SUMMARY OF THE TEXT

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- A. Only **repentant sinners** inherit the Kingdom of God.
- B. True repentance is proven by **actions and fruitful living**.
- C. Because Jesus is King, he has the right to rule and reign over **every part of our lives**.

## III. CHALLENGE FOR NEXT WEEK

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Read Chapter 4. How did Jesus withstand the strong temptations of Satan and how does it relate to Christians today?