




Day 1


 Please pray for holy guidance and insight before you begin today's study.

John the Baptist Denies Being the Christ

¹⁹ Now this was John's testimony when the Jews of Jerusalem sent priests and Levites to ask him who he was. ²⁰ He did not fail to confess, but confessed freely, "I am not the Christ."

 "Christ comes from *Christos*, a Greek word that means "the anointed one," or "the chosen one". The Hebrew word meaning the same thing is *Mashiach*, or as we know it — *Messiah*. [<https://www.bibleinfo.com/en/questions/what-does-christ-mean>]"


 "Jews of Jerusalem" refers to the Jewish Sanhedrin of Jerusalem.

 Moses and his brother Aaron were both from the Tribe of Levi. In Exodus 28:1, 40-43, God instructs the Jews that Aaron, his sons, and their descendants will "serve me as priests . . . forever [ESV]." Because Aaron was from the tribe of Levi – a Levite – members of this one tribe (of the twelve) served as Synagogue/Temple servants and priests. See also Exodus 32:25-29 (↓), with emphasis on verse 29 – these verses demonstrate the Levites' passion for the Lord (the 'Golden Calf' incident) and helped cement the Levites' position as priests and temple servants.

Exodus 32:26, 29

²⁶ So [Moses] stood at the entrance to the camp and said, "Whoever is for the Lord, come to me." And all the Levites rallied to him. . . .


²⁹ Then Moses said, "You have been set apart to the Lord today, for you were against your own sons and brothers, and he has blessed you this day."

 The Sanhedrin described: "The Great Sanhedrin (which in Greek means 'a sitting together' or 'council') was the supreme council of the Jews who met within Jerusalem's temple in a place known as the chamber of hewn stones (although they sometimes met in the house of the High Priest). The Sanhedrin was like the U.S. Supreme court in that they were the final authority on decisions that affected the religious and political life of all Jews.

"The council convened each day of the week except the Sabbath and the annual Biblical Holy Days. In New Testament times, the Sanhedrin was composed of seventy-one members (the High Priest, a vice chief justice and sixty-nine general members). Only chief priests, elders, and scribes [of which some were lawyers] were eligible to sit on the council. [All priests were descendants of and selected from the tribe of Levi (Levites).]

"Members the Great Sanhedrin were required to possess scholarship, modesty, strength, courage, and popularity among their fellow men. Their rulings were binding (for a time) on all Jews scattered throughout the world. Their jurisdiction, however, was greatly curtailed by Herod the Great and then by the Roman Empire.

"The council is traditionally viewed as the last institution that commanded universal Jewish authority among the Jewish people. Until the time when Judea was subjected to the Romans, it had the power of life and death. In New Testament times, however, although it retained the power of passing sentence, the Roman Empire retained the right to accept or reject their verdicts and to ultimately decide to carry out penalties." [© Bible Study, <https://www.biblestudy.org/beginner/new-testament-groups/sanhedrin.html>]

 Within the Sanhedrin were primarily two factions, the Pharisees, who believed in the resurrection of the soul, and the Sadducees, who believed there was no resurrection. Jesus pointedly rebuked both factions of the Sanhedrin, but this exchange recorded in Matthew 22 (↓) occurred between Jesus and the Sadducees.

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Matthew 22:23, 29, 31-32

²³ The same day Sadducees came to him, who say that there is no resurrection, and they asked him a question . . .

²⁹ But Jesus answered them, “You are wrong, because you know neither the Scriptures nor the power of God. . . ³¹ And as for the resurrection of the dead, have you not read what was said to you by God:

³² ‘I am the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob’? He is not God of the dead, but of the living.”


Q1. Why did the Jewish religious leaders ask John the Baptist if he were “the Christ”?

 The ministry of John the Baptist was so extraordinary the Sanhedrin sent representatives to question him. The Jews knew about the prophecy from Moses recorded in Deuteronomy 18 (↓). They wanted to identify any potential prophet to determine authenticity and the possible fulfillment of Moses’ prophecy.

Deuteronomy 18:15, 18 [Moses prophesied:]

¹⁵ The Lord your God will raise up for you a prophet like me from among your own brothers. You must listen to him. . .

¹⁸ I will raise up for them a prophet like you from among their brothers; I will put my words in his mouth, and he will tell them everything I command him.

 Then, in addition to Moses’ prophecy, Daniel recorded a prophecy in his Book of Daniel (Daniel 9:24-27) that foretold of a time when the “Anointed One” (the Messiah, the Christ) will come. The Jews of Jesus’ time knew that the prophesied day was near. While present-day scholars have tried to prove the precision of Daniel’s prophecy by comparing it to the historical record of archeology and secular history, the definitive proof is elusive. That said, a specific scenario does exist that supports the prophecy of Daniel 9:24-27 and points to the timing of the ministry of Christ Jesus.


Daniel 9:24-27 [Note: We can use some verses in the Bible to better understand other verses; “seventy sevens” equates to 70 times the number of days in a week (7). The basis for this interpretation is found in Genesis 29:27, Leviticus 25:8, and Numbers 14:34.]

²⁴ "Seventy 'sevens' [490 years; see] are decreed for your people and your holy city to finish transgression, to put an end to sin, to atone for wickedness, to bring in everlasting righteousness, to seal up vision and prophecy and to anoint the most holy.

²⁵ "Know and understand this: From the issuing of the decree to restore and rebuild Jerusalem until the Anointed One, the ruler, comes, there will be seven 'sevens' [49 years, during which Jerusalem and its walls were rebuilt], and sixty-two 'sevens' [434 years]. It will be rebuilt with streets and a trench, but in times of trouble.


²⁶ After the sixty-two 'sevens' [434 years], the Anointed One will be cut off [see Isaiah 53:8] and will have nothing. The people of the ruler who will come will destroy the city and the sanctuary. The end will come like a flood: War will continue until the end, and desolations have been decreed.

²⁷ He will confirm a covenant with many for one 'seven' [7 years]. In the middle of the 'seven' he will put an end to sacrifice and offering. And on a wing of the temple, he will set up an abomination that causes desolation, until the end that is decreed is poured out on him."

 “We have, in verses 24-27, one of the most remarkable prophecies of Christ, of his coming and his salvation. It shows that the Jews are guilty of [a] most obstinate unbelief, in expecting another Messiah, so [many centuries] after the time expressly fixed for his coming. The seventy weeks mean a day for a year, or 490 years. About the end of this period a sacrifice [Jesus] would be offered, making full atonement for sin, and bringing in everlasting righteousness for the

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complete justification of every believer. Then the Jews, in the crucifixion of Jesus, would commit that crime by which the measure of their guilt would be filled up, and troubles would come upon their nation. All blessings bestowed on sinful man come through Christ's atoning sacrifice, who suffered once for sins, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God. Here is our way of access to the throne of grace, and of our entrance to heaven. This seals the sum of prophecy, and confirms the covenant with many; and while we rejoice in the blessings of salvation, we should remember what they cost the Redeemer. How can those escape who neglect [such a] great salvation!" [©1706, *Concise Commentary on the Whole Bible* by Matthew Henry; <https://biblehub.com/commentaries/daniel/9-24.htm>]

 Regarding Daniel 9:25, another commentator stated, "Artaxerxes Longimanus, [who is] recorded at-large [in] Ezra 7:12-26, 'was of great solemnity and efficacy, importing no less than the restoration of the Jewish constitution, both civil and ecclesiastical, providing in the first place for the re-establishment of divine worship with becoming order and magnificence, exempting the [Jewish] priesthood from all taxes; then, for the civil government of the people, the institution of tribunals, and the administration of justice, according to the law of Moses. This decree answers to all the characters of the prophecy, the restoring of the constitution, the rebuilding of the city, and the chronological periods distinctly specified,' and is, no doubt, here chiefly intended." [©about 1800, *Commentary of the Old and New Testaments* by Joseph Benson. Text Courtesy of BibleSupport.com. <https://biblehub.com/commentaries/daniel/9-25.htm>. If the student wishes to read further, Joseph Benson has a short essay that goes into the various chronologies surrounding the time intervals referenced in Daniel 9. The quote – above – is an excerpt from this Benson essay.]

²¹ They asked him, "Then who are you? Are you Elijah?"

He said, "I am not."

"Are you the Prophet?"

He answered, "No."


Q2. Why did the Jewish religious leaders ask John the Baptist if he were "Elijah"?

Malachi 4:4-6

⁴ "Remember the law of my servant Moses, the decrees and laws I gave him at Horeb for all Israel.

⁵ "See, I will send you the prophet Elijah before that great and dreadful day of the LORD comes.

⁶ He will turn the hearts of the fathers to their children, and the hearts of the children to their fathers; or else I will come and strike the land with a curse."


 The Jewish religious leaders had great head knowledge of the Bible (what we know today as the Old Testament) and probably focused on this passage (↑) from Malachi (4:5-6), along with the Daniel passage.

Q3. Why were the Jewish leaders expecting something momentous from God?


Q4. What kind of Messiah were the Jews expecting? A sacrificial lamb or a political, military leader? (For help, please examine Daniel 9:25.)

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²² Finally they said, "Who are you? Give us an answer to take back to those who sent us. What do you say about yourself?"

 "In the Pharisees' minds, there were four options regarding John the Baptist's identity: he was
(1) the prophet foretold by Moses [Deuteronomy 18:15 (↑)],
(2) Elijah [Malachi 4:5 (↑)],
(3) the Messiah, or
(4) a false prophet.

John denied being the first three personages. Instead, he called himself, in the words of the Old Testament prophet Isaiah, 'A voice one calling: 'In the desert prepare the way for the Lord.'" [Isaiah 40:3]. the leaders kept pressing John to say who he was because people were expecting the Messiah to come [Luke 3:15 (↓)]. But John emphasized only why he had come – to prepare for the Messiah. The Pharisees missed the point. They wanted to know who John was, but John wanted then to know who Jesus was. [The Life Application Bible, New International Version, ©1973, 1978, 1984, published by Tyndale House Publishers and Zondervan Publishing; page 1,870]


Luke 3:15

The people were waiting expectantly and were all wondering in their hearts if John [the Baptist] might possibly be the Christ.

²³ John replied in the words of Isaiah the prophet, "I am the voice of one calling in the desert, 'Make straight the way for the Lord.'" [Isaiah 40:3]

²⁴ Now some Pharisees who had been sent ²⁵ questioned him, "Why then do you baptize if you are not the Christ, nor Elijah, nor the Prophet?"

²⁶ "I baptize with water," John replied, "but among you stands one you do not know.

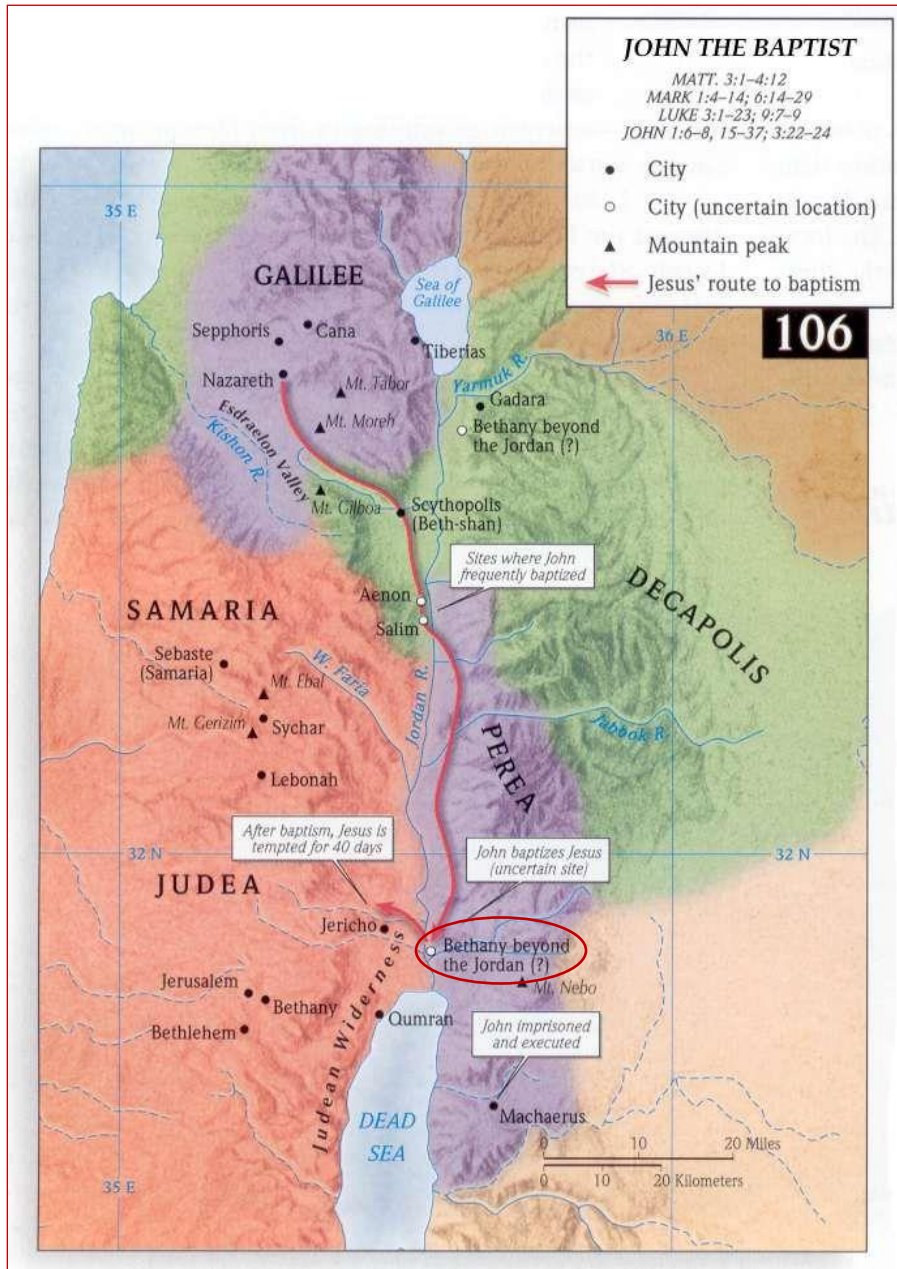
 "John was baptizing Jews. The [Jewish] Essenes (a strict, monastic sect of Judaism) practiced baptism for purification, but normally only non-Jews (Gentiles) were baptized when they converted to Judaism. When the Pharisees questioned John's authority to baptize, they were asking who gave John the right to treat God's chosen people [the Jews] like Gentiles. John said, 'I baptize with water' – he was merely helping the people perform a symbolic act of repentance. But soon one would come who would truly forgive sins, something only the Son of God – the Messiah – could do." [The Life Application Bible, New International Version, ©1973, 1978, 1984, published by Tyndale House Publishers and Zondervan Publishing; pages 1,870-1,871]

Q5. Why does John the Baptist reference a passage from Isaiah?

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²⁷ “He is the one who comes after me, the thongs of whose sandals I am not worthy to untie.”

²⁸ This all happened at Bethany on the other side of the Jordan, where John was baptizing.



Source: <https://i.pinimg.com/originals/83/30/7f/83307fce982ce6ef9920a46380699395.jpg>

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Matthew 3:1-17

John the Baptist Prepares the Way

¹ In those days John the Baptist came, preaching in the Desert of Judea ² and saying, “Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is near.” ³ This is he who was spoken of through the prophet Isaiah:

“A voice of one calling in the desert, ‘Prepare the way for the Lord, make straight paths for him.’ ”
[Isaiah 40:3]

⁴ John's clothes were made of camel's hair, and he had a leather belt around his waist. His food was locusts and wild honey. ⁵ People went out to him from Jerusalem and all Judea and the whole region of the Jordan. ⁶ Confessing their sins, they were baptized by him in the Jordan River.

⁷ But when he saw many of the Pharisees and Sadducees coming to where he was baptizing, he said to them: “You brood of vipers! Who warned you to flee from the coming wrath? ⁸ Produce fruit in keeping with repentance. ⁹ And do not think you can say to yourselves, ‘We have Abraham as our father.’ I tell you that out of these stones God can raise up children for Abraham. ¹⁰ The ax is already at the root of the trees, and every tree that does not produce good fruit will be cut down and thrown into the fire.

¹¹ “I baptize you with water for repentance. But after me will come one who is more powerful than I, whose sandals I am not fit to carry. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and with fire. ¹² His winnowing fork is in his hand, and he will clear his threshing floor, gathering his wheat into the barn and burning up the chaff with unquenchable fire.”

Jesus is Baptized

¹³ Then, Jesus came from Galilee to the Jordan to be baptized by John. ¹⁴ But John tried to deter him, saying, “I need to be baptized by you, and do you come to me?”

¹⁵ Jesus replied, “Let it be so now; it is proper for us to do this to fulfill all righteousness.” Then John consented.

¹⁶ As soon as Jesus was baptized, he went up out of the water. At that moment heaven was opened, and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove and lighting on him. ¹⁷ And a voice from heaven said, “This is my Son, whom I love; with him I am well pleased.”

Q6. In verse Matthew 3:11 John exhorts his listeners to “repent”; what does repentance mean?

Q7. Again, considering Matthew 3:11, is repentance important to the Believer? To God?

Believer?

God?

Q8. Why did John the Baptist state, “the thongs of whose sandals I am not worthy to untie”?

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Exodus 3:1-6


¹ Now Moses was tending the flock of Jethro his father-in-law, the priest of Midian, and he led the flock to the far side of the desert and came to Horeb, the mountain of God.

² There the angel of the Lord appeared to him in flames of fire from within a bush. Moses saw that though the bush was on fire it did not burn up. ³ So Moses thought, "I will go over and see this strange sight – why the bush does not burn up."

⁴ When the Lord saw that he had gone over to look, God called to him from within the bush, "Moses! Moses!" And Moses said, "Here I am."


⁵ "Do not come any closer," God said. "Take off your sandals, for the place where you are standing is holy ground." ⁶ Then he said, "I am the God of your father, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac and the God of Jacob." At this, Moses hid his face, because he was afraid to look at God.

 John the Baptist knew he was heralding a man from God, but he did not know who. John was aware of his personal sinful nature, and did not consider himself worthy to untie the sandals of the divine, faultless man of God. In fact, John the Baptist asked the man of God to baptize him! John's attitude may have been shaped by Moses' encounter with God at the 'burning bush'.

 Imagine John's (the Baptist) immediate surprise when he recognized Jesus, and that the Messiah was actually one of his cousins (Luke 3:36: John's mother Elizabeth was related to Jesus's mother Mary). John then conducted Jesus' baptism and heard the loving Words of God the Father spoken to His Son Jesus. And then John the Baptist would have reflected upon the character of his cousin and concluded that Jesus was, in fact, the long-awaited Son of God! The Messiah! The Christ!

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Day 3

 Please pray for holy guidance and insight before you begin today's study.

Jesus the Lamb of God

²⁹ The next day John [the Baptist] saw Jesus coming toward him and said, “Look, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world!”

Q9. What do you think the phrase “Lamb of God” means?

Genesis 22:8

Abraham answered, “God himself will provide the lamb for the burnt offering, my son.” And the two of them went on together.

Exodus 29:38-41

³⁸ “This is what you are to offer on the altar regularly each day: two lambs a year old. ³⁹ Offer one in the morning and the other at twilight. ⁴⁰ With the first lamb offer a tenth of an ephah [2 quarts] of fine flour mixed with a quarter of a hin [1 quart] of oil from pressed olives, and a quarter of a hin of wine as a drink offering. ⁴¹ Sacrifice the other lamb at twilight with the same grain offering and its drink offering as in the morning — a pleasing aroma, an offering made to the LORD by fire.

Isaiah 53:7

He was oppressed and afflicted, yet he did not open his mouth; he was led like a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearers is silent, so he did not open his mouth.

Q10. From verse 29, what does the phrase “who takes away the sin of the world” mean to you?

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Why is the Old Testament so “brutal”?

One Sunday afternoon my wife and I were visiting my sister-in-law in her hospital room. As we were discussing the Bible and in particular the Old Testament, my sister-in-law commented, “It is brutal!” And that comment led to a great conversation.

So. As my sister-in-law asked, “Why is the Old Testament so ‘brutal’?” It depicts animal sacrifices, annihilated cities, enslaved people-groups, and bloody battles.

God wants us to come to Him out of love, out of a passionate desire to be with Him. However, He has given us humans free-choice to believe in His Son, our Redeemer. He does not want human robots – He could have very easily shaped us to want Him (with no free choice), but He wanted us to join Him for all eternity because we want to do so. The Old Testament exists as a historical narrative, with a glimpse into God’s character, all pointing to the future Messiah.

So, why did God institute animal sacrifice, including young sheep – adorable lambs? Why all the blood? Why did all of those animals have to die?!?!?

First, we must understand that God is absolutely holy and cannot tolerate sin; He cannot be in the same room with a sinner. Sin is serious stuff! Blood is life. Sin is death.

In the Old Testament, God instituted animal sacrifice as a way for repentant people to atone (i.e., to make amends) for sin. An animal had to die for the sins of the people or for the person; over and over and over. The shed blood of the animal-sacrifice atones for the person’s sin; otherwise, unrepentant sin is death.

Second, God wanted people to understand the seriousness of sin. Therefore, in a number of instances God judged the egregious sin of a city or people-group; He judged the condition of their hearts. Were the people repentant or unrepentant? In His infinite wisdom God knew if the people would repent in the future. And He judged accordingly. Unrepentant sin is death.

In His infinite plan, all the blood in the Old Testament points to the torture and crucifixion of His Son Jesus. Jesus’ blood oozed and, perhaps, gushed from the many whip-caused lacerations that gouged His body. His shed blood was (and is) the final sacrifice for sin. If a person does not believe in God, or His Son Christ Jesus and His saving grace, then they remain under the Law (the Ten Commandments). If one commandment is broken, then the person has sinned. Blood is life. Sin is death. God does not grade on a curve. Any sinful act is death.

We can judge that the Old Testament is “brutal” and we then, by extension, judge that God is “brutal.” We must never forget that God is God, and we are ‘the created’. It doesn’t matter if you believe that the ‘Theory of Evolution’ is fact or if the earth is 6,000 years old. It matters not what human knowledge you or I believe. We are the created. God is the Creator.

Within the pages of the Old Testament, God has given us example upon example of the consequence for sin. It is up to you and me to choose life, to choose to accept the saving grace of Christ Jesus and the blood that He shed for our salvation. Through His sacrifice, Jesus paid the penalty for our sins and, when God judges you and me, we who believe will receive a verdict of “Not guilty!” It is a tremendous, life-giving gift that was given at a deadly cost to the Giver!

What is your choice? What (or Who) do you choose?

³⁰ This is the one I meant when I said, 'A man who comes after me has surpassed me because he was before me.'

Q11. What did John the Baptist mean when he said, “A man who comes after me has surpassed me”?


Q12. What did John the Baptist mean when he said, “he was before me”?

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³¹ I myself did not know him, but the reason I came baptizing with water was that he might be revealed to Israel."


Q13. How would you explain John's comment, "I myself did not know him"?

Q14. What did John's immersion baptism represent?

 "When you wash [muddy] hands, the results are immediately visible. But repentance happens inside with a cleansing that isn't seen right away. So, John used a symbolic action that people could see: baptism. The Jews used baptism to initiate converts. So, John's audience was familiar with the rite. Here, baptism was used as a sign of repentance and forgiveness. Repent means 'to turn,' implying a change in behavior. It is turning from sin toward God..." [The Life Application Bible, New International Version, ©1973, 1978, 1984, published by Tyndale House Publishers and Zondervan Publishing; page 1,648]

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³² Then John gave this testimony: "I saw the Spirit come down from heaven as a dove and remain on him. ³³ I would not have known him, except that the one who sent me to baptize with water told me, 'The man on whom you see the Spirit come down and remain is he who will baptize with the Holy Spirit.'

Q15. How do you think John the Baptist received his preaching / baptizing assignment?

Q16. When did Jesus fulfill John's prophecy, "he who will baptize with the Holy Spirit"? (Acts 1 & 2, specifically Acts 2:1-4)

Q17. Do you think that John the Baptist was the only person to have seen the baptism of Jesus and heard the Words from God? Or were there others listening to John and watching the baptisms? Additionally, Scripture acknowledges that John the Baptist had several disciples (Mark 2:18; John 1:35-37).

Acts 1:4-5, 2:1-4


⁴ On one occasion, while he [the resurrected Christ Jesus] was eating with them [His disciples], he gave them this command: "Do not leave Jerusalem, but wait for the gift my Father promised, which you have heard me speak about. ⁵ For John baptized with water, but in a few days you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit."

^{2:1} When the day of Pentecost came, they were all together in one place. ² Suddenly a sound like the blowing of a violent wind came from heaven and filled the whole house where they were sitting. ³ They saw what seemed to be tongues of fire that separated and came to rest on each of them. ⁴ All of them were filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other tongues as the Spirit enabled them.

³⁴ I [John the Baptist] have seen and I testify that this is the Son of God."


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Day 5

 Please pray for holy guidance and insight before you begin today's study.

Jesus' First Disciples

³⁵ The next day John [the Baptist] was there again with two of his disciples.

 In verse 40, one of the two disciples is identified: Andrew. The second disciple is not identified, but scholars believe it is John, the one Jesus loved, the writer of this Gospel.

³⁶ When he saw Jesus passing by, he said, "Look, the Lamb of God!"

³⁷ When the two disciples heard him say this, they followed Jesus.

Q18. Why do you think the two disciples seemed to have immediately left John's side for Jesus?

³⁸ Turning around, Jesus saw them following and asked, "What do you want?"

They said, "Rabbi" (which means Teacher), "where are you staying?"

Q19. Didn't Jesus know their hearts? Why do you think He asked the two following Him, "What do you want"? (This question from Jesus was a kind query, not a harsh rebuke.)

Q20. What does their response to Jesus imply? (They used the title "Rabbi"; and they no doubt had many questions.)

Significance of "Rabbi"?

"Where are you staying?"

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³⁹ "Come," he replied, "and you will see."

So, they went and saw where he was staying, and spent that day with him. It was about the tenth hour [4 p.m.].

Q21. What do you think Andrew and John observed and learned during their time with Jesus?

⁴⁰ Andrew, Simon Peter's brother, was one of the two who heard what John had said and who had followed Jesus. ⁴¹ The first thing Andrew did was to find his brother Simon and tell him, "We have found the Messiah" (that is, the Christ).

Q22. Why did Andrew seek his brother Simon? (Do you think that Andrew and Simon were "close" brothers?)

Q23. Did Andrew delay? Was he excited? How can you tell?


⁴² And he brought him to Jesus.

Jesus looked at him and said, "You are Simon son of John. You will be called Cephas" (which, when translated, is Peter [both Cephas (Aramaic) and Peter (Greek) mean rock]).

Q24. What do you think Peter felt when he heard Jesus' Words?

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Day 6

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Jesus Calls Philip and Nathanael

⁴³ The next day Jesus decided to leave for Galilee. Finding Philip, he said to him, "Follow me."

Q25. What did Jesus have that caused these men to drop everything and follow Him?

⁴⁴ Philip, like Andrew and Peter, was from the town of Bethsaida. ⁴⁵ Philip found Nathanael and told him, "We have found the one Moses wrote about in the Law, and about whom the prophets also wrote — Jesus of Nazareth, the son of Joseph."

⁴⁶ "Nazareth! Can anything good come from there?" Nathanael asked. "Come and see," said Philip.

 Nazareth was despised by the Jews because a Roman army garrison was located there. Some have speculated that an aloof attitude or a poor reputation in morals and religion on the part of the people of Nazareth led to Nathanael's harsh comment. Nathanael's hometown was Cana, about four miles from Nazareth. [The Life Application Bible, New International Version, ©1973, 1978, 1984, published by Tyndale House Publishers and Zondervan Publishing; page 1,873]

Q26. What is prejudice?

 Prejudice: 1. a. An adverse judgment or opinion formed beforehand or without knowledge or examination of the facts. b. A preconceived preference or idea. [Copyright © 2009 Farlex, Inc., The FreeDictionary]

Q27. What would have happened to Nathanael had he allowed his prejudice to overcome his curiosity and the invitation?

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⁴⁷ When Jesus saw Nathanael approaching, he said of him, "Here is a true Israelite, in whom there is nothing false."

Q28. How do you think Nathanael felt when he heard Jesus make this pronouncement about his character?

⁴⁸ "How do you know me?" Nathanael asked.

Jesus answered, "I saw you while you were still under the fig tree before Philip called you."

⁴⁹ Then Nathanael declared, "Rabbi, you are the Son of God; you are the King of Israel."

Q29. What abilities are implied in Jesus' statement?

Q30. Why do you think Nathanael made that pronouncement, instead of something like, "A lucky guess"? What was Nathanael's revelation?

⁵⁰ Jesus said, "You believe because I told you I saw you under the fig tree. You shall see greater things than that." ⁵¹ He then added, "I tell you the truth, you shall see heaven open, and the angels of God ascending and descending on the Son of Man."

Q31. What do you think Jesus meant (or implied) when He said, "you shall see heaven open, and the angels of God ascending and descending on the Son of Man"?

Genesis 28:10-18

¹⁰ Jacob left Beersheba and set out for Haran. ¹¹ When he reached a certain place, he stopped for the night because the sun had set. Taking one of the stones there, he put it under his head and lay down to sleep. ¹² He had a dream in which he saw a stairway [or ladder] resting on the earth, with its top reaching to heaven, and the angels of God were ascending and descending on it. ¹³ There above it stood the LORD,

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and he said: "I am the LORD, the God of your father Abraham and the God of Isaac. I will give you and your descendants the land on which you are lying. ¹⁴ Your descendants will be like the dust of the earth, and you will spread out to the west and to the east, to the north and to the south. All peoples on earth will be blessed through you and your offspring. ¹⁵ I am with you and will watch over you wherever you go, and I will bring you back to this land. I will not leave you until I have done what I have promised you."

¹⁶ When Jacob awoke from his sleep, he thought, "Surely the LORD is in this place, and I was not aware of it." ¹⁷ He was afraid and said, "How awesome is this place! This is none other than the house of God; this is the gate of heaven."

¹⁸ Early the next morning Jacob took the stone he had placed under his head and set it up as a pillar and poured oil on top of it. ¹⁹ He called that place Bethel [meaning House of God], though the city used to be called Luz.



Angels of God: "Those pure and holy beings that dwell in heaven, and that are employed as ministering spirits to our world, *Hebrews 1:14*. Good men are represented in the Scriptures as being under their protection, *Psalms 91:11-12*; *Genesis 28:12*. They are the agents by which God often expressed his will to men, *Hebrews 2:2*; *Galatians 3:19*. They are represented as strengthening the Lord Jesus, and ministering unto him. Thus, they aided him in the wilderness *Mark 1:13*, and in the garden *Luke 22:43*, and they were present when he rose from the dead, *Matthew 28:2-4*; *John 20:12-13*. By their ascending and descending upon him it is probable that he meant that Nathanael would have evidence that they came to his aid, and that he would have "the" kind of protection and assistance from God which would show "more fully that he was the Messiah." Thus, his life, his many deliverances from dangers, his wisdom to confute his skilled and cunning adversaries, the scenes of his death, and the attendance of angels at his resurrection, may all be represented by the angels descending upon him, and all would show to Nathanael and the other disciples most clearly that he was the Son of God.

The Son of man: "A term by which he often describes himself. It shows his humility, his love for man, his willingness to be esteemed "as a man," *Philippians 2:6-7*." [©1834, *Notes on the Bible* by Albert Barnes. <https://biblehub.com/commentaries/john/1-51.htm>]



**No Jesus,
no peace.**



**Know Jesus,
know peace!**

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