

The Gospels

A VERSE-BY-VERSE STUDY OF THE LIFE OF JESUS CHRIST

THE GOSPEL ACCORDING TO MATTHEW – WEEK THREE

Last week we reviewed the Birth of Jesus to the return of Jesus to Nazareth.

Today, we will discover the one who fore ran or prepared the way for Jesus, His cousin, John the Baptist. We will learn more about what I spoke of previously, the Nazarite vow as we consider John the Baptist, as he was dedicated as a Nazarite before his birth.

*But first let's consider Nazareth. The name Nazareth likely comes from a Hebrew root word "nasar"¹ the second definition, meaning a shoot, green or new growth. It has also been noted that it could come from "nasar" which means to guard, watch or keep. Some called Nazareth the Watchtower city. It was not merely a village, but it was actually home to the Roman Garrison for the region. Which agrees with the watchtower connotation. There is another word we will study today that sounds very close to the root word for Nazareth, and that is **nazar**¹ and while nazar may have nothing to do with Nazareth – it has everything to do with today's subject and some beautiful illustrations of the way God wove every detail of Old Testament Scripture together to bring us to this place we study today.*

In Matthew 2:23, the apostle asserts that Joseph, Mary and Jesus settled in Nazareth after returning from Egypt so Jesus would be called a Nazarene. Not a nazirite, but Nazarene. If you look carefully at the passage, there is not actual Old Testament scripture citation affirming this prophecy. That's Right! In all the Old Testament

scriptures, the word “Nazarene” does not appear. Based on the definitions above, the best evidence of Messianic prophecy pointing to Nazareth is Isaiah 11, where it refers to Jesus as a shoot of Jesse, offspring of David. A new growth, green sprout... Of the Line of David.

So today we meet John the Baptist. Later in the book of Luke we will discover how John the Baptist is related to Jesus, but for now we are going to look at this chapter and dig deeper into the vow of the Nazarite priests. (For more information search the Nazarite Vow at <http://agapebiblestudy.com> [Micah Hunt]).

This week’s theme is Consecration and Repentance.

MATTHEW | CHAPTER THREE

The Forerunner

- ***The Voice of One Crying in the Desert***

- John the Baptist’s obedience to his dedication from birth resulted in the prophecy of Isaiah 40:3 being fulfilled. He came as one who prepares or makes the way – a forerunner. One who literally ran ahead of ...
- John the Baptist was a Nazarite from birth. He lived his life set apart to the service of God.
- He preached in the wilderness of Judea
- What did He preach? “Repent! The Kingdom of Heaven is at hand.”
 - ♥ Repent – *metanoeo*¹ (meta-nooya) literally means to change one’s mind. (Think Differently)
 - ♥ Why? The Kingdom of Heaven is at hand.
- John’s baptism was a ceremonial cleansing representing repentance, after confession of sins. This ceremonial washing came in the form of a bath in the local temple or synagogue. But, here was John, out in the

- desert, calling people to repent and be washed, cleansed of their sin as a sign of repentance.
- John comes to let the Pharisees and religious leaders know “There’s a new Sherriff in town” and His name is Jesus.
 - Jesus receives John’s baptism unto repentance, and for the first time in history we find a beautiful picture of the Triune nature of God. The Father’s voice declaring affirmation over His beloved Son, Jesus, and the Holy Spirit descending and resting on Jesus like a dove.
 - If it is true of Jesus, and you’ve received Him, It’s true about you!
 - Declare over yourself today: The Lord says of me, “This is my beloved daughter, _____(your name) in whom I am well pleased.”

End Notes:

¹ NAS Exhaustive Concordance of the Bible with Hebrew-Aramaic and Greek Dictionaries. Copyright © 1981, 1998 by The Lockman Foundation

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